ILLITERATE JUDGES **BRYAN WOOLLEY**

THE NATION

OCTOBER 4, 1975 *50 cents*

Whose Ox Is Gored? ***William K. Tabb***

INCOME SHARES AND RECOVERY

PORTUGAL
A Most Peculiar Revolution
Bert Cochran

FISHERMEN BE DAMNED
Writing Off an Industry
Robert A. Kolbe

CONSUMER ACTION IN CALIFORNIA
Smoking Out the Bureaucrats
Jennifer Cross

Ronald Radosh: 'Prophets on the Right'

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LETTERS

in-house utilities

Berkeley, Calif.

Readers of *The Nation* [July 19] who may have wondered about the big telephone ad should be warned that the monopoly is worried about competition—this time from in-house telephone systems, which are growing by leaps and bounds since some recent court decisions.

In fact, both telephone and electric monopolies have plenty to bother them from in-house systems. On-site power is called total energy and gets 85 per cent efficiency, compared to the central power plant's 40 per cent, because it uses the hot water for heating or air conditioning and avoids line loss.

Although the total energy system has long been in use, HUD is letting contracts to prove its worth. During the continuing energy crisis, cities, special districts and individual owners of large sites such as shopping centers, apartment houses, schools and factories should look into the advantages of in-house systems which cut costs below those charged by the local utility. *Charles S. Smith*

rapping about *Jaws*

San Francisco, Calif.

In his review of *Jaws* [Aug.30] Robert Hatch can't seem to decide which of his two hats to wear: that of Executive Editor--perhaps searching for broader readership and maybe even advertising revenues from film corporations—or his film critic cap and gown, with its accompanying sense of social responsibility. The many-sided voices in the review force sad conclusions. I'll cite just a few of the oddities:

In one paragraph Hatch speaks approvingly of the film as a "well-constructed family entertainment" and in another, with apparently no less charity, as "a kind of pornography."

Then he proceeds, with benign contempt, to take to task those (other film critics?) who "tut-tut" the film as one that proves "ours is a sadly debased society which . . . hungers after degrading sensation." Having thus enjoyed a good scoff, does he proceed to demonstrate that their "tut-tutting" has no validity? Hell, no! He skates happily away, merely saying as he figure-eights around that if this society is indeed debased, it is not without "precedents." "The Romans liked their entertainment bloody," he tells us. Ergo: if they had their blood and circuses, why not us?

About pornography in our "new permissiveness" he finds a not-too-hidden blessing: they can now "make explicit what hitherto they have had to handle by innuendo." And, "On balance, that seems not unhealthy—innuendo being a rather crawly device. . . ." On with explicit porn: the family that sex-plays together stays together! What next in *The Nation*, nude center-spreads? Watch out, *Playboy*! *Lester Cole*

I don't object to Mr. Cole's image of me happily performing figure-eights while trying to choose between two hats, one of which turns out to be the cap and gown customarily worn by film critics. I can't help it if he sees something odd in the suggestion that a "well-constructed family entertainment" might be hoked-up with the pornography of violence. And I haven't the space here to debate with him my view that many observers of the current "permissiveness" have become excessively disturbed by what I believe is a boring, and what I hope is a passing, phenomenon. But I do regret his reference to circulation and advertising revenue. I make no claim to infallibility, but venal I am not. *Robert Hatch*

floating decimal

Amherst, Mass.

In my article, "The Demography of Gun Control" [*The Nation*, Sept. 20], there is a typo that may lead to some confusion. At the bottom of p. 243, second column, there is a parenthetical phrase, "only thirty-eight of them in a survey of 15,000 people." This should read, ". . . in a survey of 1,500 people." The affluent Protestant pistol owners are definitely a minority, but not that tiny! *James D. Wright*

EDITORIALS

A Path Opens

Genuine negotiations in a spirit of give-and-take marked the recent seventh Special Session of the U.N. General Assembly on Development and International Cooperation. The businesslike atmosphere maintained round the clock in closed sessions was in striking contrast to the last eighteen months of rhetoric and confrontation between the Third World and the industrial countries.

The dialogue that has begun is designed to reduce the gap between developing and developed countries by protecting the purchasing power of raw material producers, diversifying and increasing their productive capacity (also in the field of agriculture) and easing their access to world markets and technology. This welcome transformation in a forum addicted to posturing polemics is due to many factors, inspired mostly by realism and self-interest on all sides.

For their part, the developing countries realize that the strident revolutionary statement of their claims for a new economic order, embodied in General Assembly declarations at the sixth Special Session of April 1974, have evoked no response from the industrial countries, which control most of the world's economic power. A realistic assessment of this situation caused the developing countries to move from ideology to concrete issues.

For the rich Western capitalist countries, Japan included, it has become clear that the traditional economic order no longer functions effectively and that the national problems of inflation, unemployment and scarcity of raw materials, as well as of international monetary upheavals, must be tied in some way to a reorganization of economic relations and an easing of the plight of poor, debt-ridden countries.

Within these two coalitions, cracks occurred over the last year and a half, with the action-oriented and compromise-prone countries seizing the lead from the more dogmatic ones. In the Third World, initiative passed from the Algerian doctrinaire radicals to more moderate and needier Africans, Asians and Latin Americans. Calls for revolution gave way to proposals for reform and a better understanding of the present mood and economic situation of the West. In the industrial camp, the European Economic Community, with the initiative of France (and later Britain, at the Commonwealth Conference), worked for the principle of dialogue. Already, with the Lomé Agreement of March 1975, the EEC had established practical arrangements to guard against fluctuations of commodities and trade with African, Caribbean and some Pacific countries. The EEC countries prepared seriously for the seventh Special Session and, speaking with one voice, participated in the drafting of a large part of the Resolution adopted on September 16.

The United States, which had lagged on the path to accommodation, joined the general effort with the September 1st speech of Secretary Kissinger, who proposed a whole series of mechanisms aimed at insuring basic economic security for developing countries, especially the poorest ones. This comprehensive statement (which also

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contained warnings about a further increase in oil prices) was generally appreciated as signaling a new political attitude, and fifteen of the American proposals found their way into the final Resolution. However, the tardiness and complexity of the American papers prevented an informed reaction from the appropriate ministries in foreign capitals. Questions were also raised about the practical and, above all, the financial implementation of mechanisms—matters on which Secretaries Kissinger and Simon are known not to see eye to eye, and which must be approved by Congress. Many countries wonder what will happen to appropriations when such proposals as a new development facility within the International Monetary Fund, which would provide annual loans of more than $2.5 billion to sustain development programs in the face of export fluctuations, come to the floor in Washington.

The United States is explicit that its proposals are primarily an agenda, presented at this stage to open the way for prolonged negotiations in numerous economic conferences. But in fact the long document, adopted unanimously by the General Assembly and dealing with trade, financial development, industrialization, science and technology, food and agricultural restructuring of the U.N. economic sector, is not intended merely as a blueprint of a "new economic order." In the words of Jan Pronk, the Dutch Minister for cooperation and trade who presided over the negotiations, it is to be understood as "a real commitment by all to commit something when developing and developed countries start negotiating concrete issues in the very near future." The next negotiating forum will be the conference called for Paris later this month.

The consensus finally obtained in New York was a cliff-hanger to the end. A minimal result, tantamount to failure, would have been a mere listing of points of agreement and disagreement. Instead, each camp made concessions, and all agreed to have as few reservations as possible. (The so-called consensus of the sixth Special Session had been vitiated from the start by key reservations from the industrial world.) The "77" (the group of developing countries at the U.N.) agreed, among other points, that in exchange for a genuine consensus, it would not insist on the following:

¶A rigid demand for indexing, on the international market, the prices of raw materials to the prices of industrial goods.

¶An automatic link between Special Drawing Rights in the International Monetary Fund and development aid.

¶A totally unrealistic target of 7 per cent of the industrial countries' GNP for development assistance by 1980.

The United States, which opposes indexing as being contrary to the premises of a free-market economy and a cause of inflation, agreed that this question should be discussed at the next meeting of UNCTAD (the U.N. Conference on Trade and Development) and committed itself to increased development aid. Angry television rhetoric from U.S. Ambassador Daniel P. Moynihan, who thought the 77 had reneged on a compromise, introduced a tense atmosphere on a crucial Sunday afternoon, but the work went on to a satisfactory conclusion.

The thirtieth regular session of the General Assembly started immediately after the Special Session, and hope has been voiced by many that the constructive spirit of the

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one will carry over to the other. That is possible, if a new crisis does not erupt in the political field, especially in the always-explosive Middle East. The seventh Special Session, Chairman Pronk said, was quite an important "happening." It could be more than that—in the words of the new President of the thirtieth General Assembly, Luxembourg's Prime Minister Gaston Thorn, it could usher in a "second generation" of the United Nations, a generation of conciliation. *Anne Tuckerman*

The Korean Connection

The recent American veto of North and South Vietnam's application for admission to the United Nations was unwise as well as unjust; it further isolates the United States and weakens its credibility at the U.N. The official justification of the veto was that "selective universality" was unacceptable as a criterion for admission—in plainer language, that the United States won't allow the Vietnams into the U.N. until the Security Council admits South Korea.

It's a specious argument, as the members of the General Assembly affirmed by voting 123 to nothing to ask the Security Council to "reconsider immediately and affirmatively" the applications from Hanoi and Saigon. "Nobody believed the American excuse," Michael Berlin reports in the *New York Post*, "not even the Americans themselves." Berlin notes that the South Korean application has been dormant since 1949, and that the United States had never pressed for its approval until the veto of the Vietnams.

The U.S. action probably stemmed from the Ford administration's fear of attack from an occasionally hostile Republican right wing, as well as from petty orneriness by Secretary of State Kissinger, who is still peeved by the Vietnamese victory in Southeast Asia. For their part, the Vietnamese representatives at the U.N. have been conciliatory, appealing to the United States for their removal from the government's Z list—that compendium of nations forbidden to receive public or private assistance or trade. Allowed to speak at the U.N. by a friendly General Assembly, Dinh Ba Thi of South Vietnam said his government has sought normal relations with the United States, but that the Ford-Kissinger administration has spurned its overtures. His speech, and that by the North Vietnamese delegate, reported Kathleen Teltsch in *The New York Times*, "struck many diplomats . . . as being markedly moderate."

Kissinger may be smarting because the Vietnamese defeated his policies, but that is no excuse for pursuing a wrong-headed, transparently phony course at the United Nations. Reuters reports that the Park regime has taken itself out of consideration for U.N. membership at this time. Kissinger has constructively called for a United States-China-North Korea-South Korea peace conference as a prelude to ending in Korea the American presence under cover of the twenty-two-year-old U.N. Command. Having done so he should direct his U.N. delegate, Daniel Patrick Moynihan, to make peace with the General Assembly majority over the issue of the Vietnams. The cost to America's security would be zero, and its besieged reputation could only be improved. An aggressive posture is worse than unwarranted; it makes no sense.

Written in Blood

Richard Helms, former CIA Director, now Ambassador to Iran, leads a charmed life. He enjoys the best possible protection against the misadventures that can unhorse even the luckiest and most highly placed personnel in the bureaucratic jungles of Washington. He knows too much. He cannot therefore be made to walk the plank or sip shellfish toxin or the quietus developed from cobra venom. On his several recent appearances before Congressional committees it has been difficult to accept his testimony at face value, but his most recent performance, before the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, can be described only as inventive kidding or leg pulling.

A Presidential order was issued on November 25, 1969 that stockpiles of deadly poisons be destroyed. The purpose was to show compliance with a solemn treaty outlawing biological agents—perhaps the first genuine disarmament treaty. President Nixon clarified his order on February 14, 1970, by removing any doubt that it was intended to cover all deadly toxins, whether biological or chemical. Helms had no doubt, or so he says, that the stocks of such substances held or controlled by the CIA fell within the order and should be destroyed, and he issued an "oral" order to this effect. It was delivered to his deputy for covert operations, Thomas Karamessines, who passed it along, orally of course, to Dr. Sidney Gottlieb, then head of the CIA's Technical Services Division, who orally transmitted it to Dr. Nathan Gordon, who apparently decided on his own to store the forbidden poisons in a vault without telling his superiors—who, if they had known, might have passed word back up the chain of command to the Commander in Chief. This testimony is not only preposterous; it is artless and inherently unbelievable. Helms assured the committee that CIA employees were trained to accept oral commands as "orders written in blood" and that he therefore spurned the notion of ink and paper. Nor did it occur to him or to his deputy or to the next man in the chain of command to verify that a Presidential order of this importance had in fact been carried out. "Does anybody really believe," asks Frank Jackman in the New York *Daily News*, "that a GS-15 government employee out at Fort Detrick, Md., took it upon himself to save that deadly shellfish toxin from destruction, in direct contravention of the orders of the President of the United States? Does anybody really believe that, in a matter of such importance, then-CIA chief Helms merely gave an oral, not a written, order to destroy these poisonous materials?" If so, the nation is in more serious trouble than it yet realizes, for the facts would show the existence of a dangerous degree of insubordination among CIA employees. Helms had kind words, in television interviews, for Gordon who, in his view, had simply yielded "on the impulse of the greater good." The suggestion, in this context, is so incredible as to be impudent. But Helms will make it stick. Nothing will happen to him. However, William Colby, his successor, is probably in trouble; he has already talked too much.

This latest insight into the workings of the intelligence bureaucracy underscores an issue of major importance: how can a Congressional committee find out for certain exactly what the CIA has done and then fix responsibility

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for the deed? How can a secret agency be made accountable? As Sen. Walter Mondale commented: "The situation always is something happened and nobody did it." The lack of accountability can have serious consequences. In this instance, the government has narrowly escaped being branded a treaty violator, thanks to some inventive testimony, but the other parties to the treaty will no doubt harbor continuing doubts about our good faith in such matters. A few elements in the Congress now recognize the importance of recapturing powers which were allowed to gravitate to the military and intelligence establishment during the cold-war period. House and Senate are moving to curb peacetime emergency powers and to check the use of "executive agreements" as a way to circumvent the need for disclosure that formal treaty ratification would require. But Congress has a long way to go before it manages to recapture powers which it has, over the years, negligently allowed to be pre-empted by various agencies of the military-intelligence, national-security apparatus.

The Voyage of Senator Byrd

Congressional junketing does occasionally have its rewards. Sen. Robert Byrd, the Majority Whip, returned from China in August with a healthily reformed perspective on the world's biggest nation. "I favor a gradual and rational evolvement toward normalization of relations between the United States and the People's Republic of China," he told his Senate colleagues after his journey, noting that "this viewpoint represents a change in my own attitude of some years ago toward China." For the most part, he said, the change stemmed from his belief in the threat of "growing Soviet power and aggressive inclinations." Yet his Senate report makes clear that Byrd's new attitude comes also from an open-minded, firsthand look at China. Making allowances for his residual anti-communism and the polite responses the Chinese are often so successful at eliciting, it seems that he likes much of what he saw.

Like Marco Polo, who arrived in Peking precisely 700 years before the Senator from West Virginia, Byrd encountered phenomena unheard of in his own country. But whereas Polo was startled by Chinese material resourcefulness—their use of asbestos, coal, pasta and paper currency—Byrd was more impressed by the Chinese social revolution. Between the intermittent, ritualistic obeisances he paid to Western capitalist notions of freedom that he did not find in China, his report contains a recognition of substantial Chinese achievement.

Though he found underemployment, "unemployment and inflation are nonexistent. . . . The streets, by all accounts are safe, day and night—and there seem to be few if any social problems of drug addiction, alcoholism or juvenile delinquency." Women "receive equal pay for equal work" and "do heavy labor on the highways and streets and railroads."

"China has apparently solved the food problem," he discovered, producing enough food for its people while farming only 10 to 12 per cent of the land with a technology years behind that of American agri-business. Similarly, China's system of free and low-cost medical care may not match in sophistication the treatment available to the American elite, but in the equity of its distribution it far outstrips health care in this country. To counter the dangers of a potential population explosion, free family-planning services (including abortion and sterilization) are available. Urban growth is planned and controlled. Though China's reliance upon coal for 85 per cent of its energy has made pollution a problem in industrial areas, decentralization of production facilities is a key strategy, and "efforts are being made to improve the quality of both air and water." As part of the continuing struggle against pollution, there are no privately owned cars—"all ride bicycles," says Byrd, a "limited number of passenger vehicles is available in each community for official purposes only." Recycling—according to Byrd the Chinese boast that solid wastes are "turned into treasures"—is integral to the national plan.

To be sure, Byrd perceived all that he found through his own ideological glasses, but that makes his openness to new ideas the more remarkable—and commendable. He came away from China believing that his own country need have no fear of it "as a viable threat . . . in the foreseeable future or as long as the Sino-Soviet split continues."

The last phrase is crucial: while the Chinese have been convincing American visitors of their peaceful intentions, they have been consistently warning about what they say is a threat from the Soviet Union. In this way, they win support for themselves as an ally against the Soviet Union—an atmosphere ideal for trade and cultural exchange—and at the same time prod the Americans to continue pressure against the Russians on what, for the Chinese, amounts to a second front in the West.

Whatever the drawbacks of such thinking for world entente, the education of Senator Byrd, one of the Senate's most powerful members, indicates that direct contact with China by U.S. politicians can result in a definite easing of Sino-American tensions. The journeys to Peking seem eminently worthwhile, for as Polo's experience proved seven centuries ago, international exchange is essential to humankind's maturity.

'Could Not Vote For'

The Harris Survey has conducted a poll in which a national cross section of 973 Democrats and independents likely to vote in 1976 indicated their first choice right now and, in a parallel column opposite each name, were given a chance to mark a "could not vote for" ballot. The list of nineteen names included all those who have declared to date and some additional names as well, but Senator Kennedy's name was omitted. Governor Wallace topped both columns. He was the first choice of 14 per cent *but* 39 per cent could not vote for him. Both Humphrey and McGovern drew more opposition than support. In fact, with the exception of Senator Jackson—first choice of 10 per cent, opposed by only 8 per cent—and Governor Brown—3 per cent for, 3 per cent opposed—every name listed drew more opposition than support. Half of the sample rejected all of the active candidates or simply could not choose among them.

To be sure, the campaign does not really get under-

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way until next year, but Jackson, Muskie, McGovern, Humphrey and Wallace have been around for a long time and most of the others named are also well known. The results underscore the problem faced by the Democrats. They also reflect as much petulance as perception. Many voters appear to be disgusted with "politics as usual" and politicians in general. There is an appetite for the kind of candidate who says what he thinks, or appears to, and means what he says, perhaps. Reagan is appealing to this mood. But there are countless citizens like Reagan who, though they say what they think, are in no sense qualified to be President. Granted that voters should be concerned about candor, they should be testing candidates for other virtues as well, including demonstrated qualities of leadership of the kind the times demand. Such candidates seem to be in dolorously short supply.

PORTUGAL

A MOST PECULIAR REVOLUTION

BERT COCHRAN

I have just returned from a three-week stay in Portugal, where I talked to people in different walks of life in the Algarve, in Lisbon, in Coimbra, Oporto and Braga in the north, as well as to several government ministers, newspaper editors and party officials. The Portugal I saw differs markedly from the Portugal one reads about in leading Western newspapers and magazines. It is not that many of the events—the attacks on Communist headquarters, the conflicts between Communists and Socialists, the rivalries in the top councils—have been related falsely, but that they have been so torn out of context and sensationalized, with participants glibly labeled to fit the assumptions of home offices, as to make the reports look like the work of partisan caricaturists.

For a start, whatever evil schemes may or may not be hatching in the heads of would-be totalitarians, Lisbon today is probably the freest and politically most vibrant city in the world. Free speech, free press and free assembly are practiced with a zeal and dedication that one will not find duplicated in the United States or elsewhere in Western Europe. This capital city, which with its various suburbs has a population less than a sixth of New York City's, has three times as many daily newspapers. Their circulations are much smaller than those of New York's papers, but that is made up for by the avid interest with which they are read and discussed. The Communist-influenced papers, *Diario de Noticias* or *O Seculo*, are slanted propaganda sheets, but then the liberal independent *Jornal Novo* and the Socialist *A Luta* are similarly tendentious. By our standards, the papers are sparse on news and overrich in political manifestoes, *feuilletons* and polemics—fare that Americans generally find indigestible, but which is eagerly consumed by a people in the throes of politicization. Taken all together, they represent pluralism with a vengeance.

On the Praca dos Restauradores, Praca d. Pedro IV, Rossio, day after day I saw knots of people engaged in and listening to political discussions, all reminiscent of New York's Union Square or Los Angeles's Pershing Square in the 1930s; nothing like it has been seen in America since the excitations of those days. The talk is intense, sometimes passionate, but the crowds are good-humored and well behaved because the Portuguese are a restrained, orderly, civilized people. Nor should it be thought that Lisbon is a solitary enclave. On one of the main thoroughfares of Oporto, the second largest city, there were similar crowds. When I was there at the end of August, Communists were distributing their party's program on how to solve the crisis; they encountered no hostilities or molestation. In mid-July, the Socialists had staged in Oporto a rally of 50,000. The many bookstores and newspaper cubicles, as in Lisbon, are loaded with Marxist-Leninist and other Left works (as well as sex literature, both home-produced and imported from Germany, France and Scandinavia). Though Oporto is dismissed by intellectuals as Portugal's equivalent of Peoria, though its two dailies are on the conservative side and Lisbon's liberal and more conservative papers are the heavy sellers, a sizable section of the populace has been caught up in the political swirl.

In Lisbon, demonstrations have become routine, and for practical purposes, they provoke no interference by the authorities. When one was held on September 4 in front of the *Diario de Noticias* building to protest some staff firings, a handful of soldiers and several tanks were on hand as a precautionary measure. The demonstration, though spirited, was nonviolent, and the soldiers acted as onlookers. The tanks were unmanned and relations between civilians and soldiers are so easy that several photographers and demonstrators climbed atop the machines the better to view the crowd; they sheepishly came down only when a soldier politely asked them to do so. The only demonstration I saw dispersed by the police, with tear gas, was held in front of the Spanish Embassy to protest the conviction of Garmendia and Otaegui, and the police did not act there until demonstrators began throwing stones and had pushed past the barriers. In a word, for those who believe that unbounded democratic expression and masses moving actively onto the political stage are sure recipes for cultural creativity and political achievement, Portugal should be pointed to with pride, not viewed with alarm.

Does not this democratic naïveté furnish the perfect

Bert Cochran teaches at Empire State College. He is the author of Harry Truman and the Crisis Presidency (*Funk & Wagnalls*).

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setting for an eventual totalitarian takeover? Are not the Communists awaiting the propitious moment to make Portugal another "people's democracy," akin to Czechoslovakia? The Western press has been pounding away at that danger with sledgehammer blows. It is undeniable that the Communists overplayed their hand and acted provocatively until the recent offensive against them, and that they incited fears among possible allies and neutrals. But even in the months when they were riding high, no one in the opposing party directorates believed for a moment that there was a practical possibility or danger of a Communist takeover. That was propaganda, to catch votes and impress foreign journalists. One has to understand some of the realities of the scene: the Communist Party was not and is not Stalinist so far as internal bureaucratization or cohesion goes. It is an organization rent by conflicting tendencies, one that must reconcile semi-factions. It grew tempestuously after the April 1974 coup, and its leaders have had to come to terms with a membership that in considerable part is in revolutionary ferment. At the same time, they have had to protect themselves on the Left from the harassments of intransigent Maoist, anarchist and Trotskyist groups which at times can propel events and people in the exalted atmosphere that prevails. The two institutional seizures that were used by Western publicists to demonstrate the totalitarian proclivities of the Communists—that of *Republica*, the Socialist-inclined daily, and *Radio Renasçensa*, the Catholic Church station—were not the doing of the Communist Party at all. The staffs of both institutions were dominated by a variety of leftists, most of whom had no attachments to the Communists. Where there were Communists among them, they were spear carriers, not the stars of the actions. The military regime tried at first to restore the paper and the station to their original owners, but the officers were too divided to want, or to be able, to confront aggressive and determined workers' committees who could count on strong support from labor and intellectual circles.

The Socialists broke demonstratively with the Communists not from fear of a Communist "people's democracy" but because they were convinced that if events were permitted to continue along the lines they were moving, the Socialist Party would be relegated to a shadow existence. The Communists had been systematically shouldering them aside in media establishments, unions, farm cooperatives, municipal bodies. It was immaterial to them that they were being squeezed out of leadership in many places because of Communist directives, in other places because of the zealotry of local Communist purists, and still elsewhere because unaffiliated militants held Social Democracy in scorn. As they saw it, they, the majority, were being denied their just representation, while the minority was grabbing more posts than its strength warranted.

The Communists' ability to run rings around the Socialists in specific institutional contests rests on superior organization. Aside from the small far Left groups, the Communists have the only party that is organized on a mass basis, with functioning divisions in popular bodies. The Socialists are in the tradition of Portuguese parties: a coterie of lawyers, government functionaries and newspaper editors, held together by reciprocal logrolling and the rewards or prospects of patronage, springing to life before elections and subsiding into their several special-interest cliques at other times. The Socialists proved that they have the largest popular following, and were able to call out a demonstration of 100,000 in Lisbon, despite Communist obstruction. But the Communists are much the stronger of the two in the revolutionary milieu, among the Left activists, trade union militants and in the universities where they find themselves hard-pressed by far-Left spokesmen. Anyone watching the impassioned, huge demonstrations they put on in Lisbon in support of the government and Gonçalves on August 20, and again on August 27, must have been convinced that they have a mass following among the working classes, agricultural laborers and the college youth in Lisbon and its environs. In contrast, the Socialist following is more diffused, and many who voted Socialist did so, as they hasten to explain, in order to put an end to leftist excitation and insure Portugal's place within the Western bloc. It must be kept in mind that the Left sweep has enveloped only a section of the populace even in the country's few major cities. A big part of the country's 8.5 million remain attached to traditional ways and associations.

Vallot

Mario Soares

The April 1975 elections for the Constituent Assembly (its function limited to writing a new constitution) brought the smoldering conflict to a head. After the Socialists won 38 per cent of the vote to the Communists' 12.5 per cent, gaining 116 delegates to the Communists' thirty and the fellow travelers' five, the government demanded that all parties acknowledge the military regime as sovereign power during an indefinite transition period. This would have all but nullified the Socialist victory at the polls. To add to their uneasiness were the many stupid, incendiary interviews that Alvaro Cunhal, the Communist chieftain, gave

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out to the foreign press, jeering at elections and boasting that the Communists would pay no attention to their results. Even so, the Socialists might have acquiesced after exacting some partisan concessions but for the crisis the month before. On March 11 Gen. Antonio de Spinola, completely miscalculating the power balances and popular mood, launched his abortive *Putsch*. In the course of putting down the rightist thrust, the capital's revolutionary resolve hardened, and the military regime lurched leftward. Private banks and insurance companies were nationalized so that the government would have some control over the nation's economic life line. According to official sources, in the previous six months the flight of capital had reached "alarming proportions." It was this nationalization that gave the government ownership of, or decisive control over, a medley of enterprises, including most of Lisbon's newspapers.

The flight of Spinola and his coadjutors and the new nationalizations sent a seismic wave of anxiety through the Western embassies, already apprehensive about Portuguese dynamics. Western leaders were convinced that, unless strong countermeasures were taken, the revolutionary onrush could become irreversible. This fear was shared by Mario Soares, the Socialist head, who confided to newspapermen that the nationalizations were a grave mistake which would frighten away indispensable foreign investments and aggravate the country's economic troubles. It was after the urging of his fellow Social Democrats at the head of West European governments and their promises of adequate support that he and his friends decided to challenge the military regime. The banner of struggle against a Communist totalitarian takeover was simply a convenient tactic to rally the populace.

This brings me to the military assembly that has been running the government since it overthrew the Salazar-Caetano corporative dictatorship in April 1974. When the character of the MFA, Movimento das Forças Armadas, was shaped in the months before the coup, the officers and noncoms making up its leadership developed a programmatic consensus that embraced three propositions: (*1*) The African wars were of no benefit to the Portuguese people; they were reactionary; they had to be ended and the rights of native peoples to self-determination rapidly recognized. (*2*) The MFA would have to continue running the government for an indefinite period. It was the only authoritative repository of the nation's revolutionary *élan*, the only force able to guarantee and extend the revolutionary cause. The political parties were unrepresentative, unreliable and inept; they could not be trusted to carry the burden. (*3*) To break the country out of its heritage of backwardness and impoverishment, it would be necessary to put through a new economic program embodying Socialist concepts and decisions to invade the monopolies' privileged sanctuaries.

When the dictatorship fell and the troops were greeted ecstatically everywhere in the "Revolution of Flowers," and all through the euphoric summer when the military was accepted as the nation's savior, the MFA program was unchallenged. In this early flush of the revolution, the Socialist Party program declared for a foreign policy of nonalignment, and the Popular Democratic Party, formed by Establishment liberals and loyal oppositionists of the previous regime, and pushed to the fore by Spinola, unterrifiedly proclaimed that "its ultimate aim" was to

Vallot

Vasco Gonçalves

make Portugal "a Socialist society in freedom." Deep red was the popular color that season.

But once the victory marches and tossing of flowers were over, and the governing officers had to grapple with problems, they found that it was easier to outline a program than to carry it out. On the African wars they acted with energy and resoluteness as soon as they got rid of Spinola after his first attempt at a coup in September. A remarkable set of understandings have been arrived at with the colonial independence movements, even though they have run into a buzz saw of difficulties in Angola. This part of their activity will be recorded as an historic achievement inaugurating a new era between Portugal and the Portuguese-speaking countries of Africa. But on the domestic part of the program—the subordination of the political parties and the economic transformation—the consensus evaporated, the revolution lost its sense of direction and purpose and the MFA has been floundering ever since.

The officers were naive to think that they could at one and the same time institutionalize their own revolutionary rule and consent to a constituent assembly dominated by their adversaries. Once the Socialists and Popular Democrats had run up a combined vote of 64 per cent, the MFA was in trouble. On one side was a body holding legitimacy through a vote of the sovereign people, and on the other a military government with no mandate from the electorate. The MFA might have retrieved the situation by calling some kind of popular assemblage to underwrite the MFA's institutionalization—it had possession, which is nine points of the law, and still enjoyed widespread popularity—but for that it needed unity in its own ranks, and unity is precisely what it lacked.

No sooner did the Socialists and Popular Democrats resign from the cabinet than a group of officers issued the Declaration of Nine, which effectively brought the debate from outside into the military councils. Again, the tactic

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employed was clever: Gen. Vasco Gonçalves, the Prime Minister, said to be a Communist, or crypto-Communist, or fellow traveler, was made the scapegoat for the crisis of confidence and his removal declared the *sine qua non* for its resolution. The campaign was pressed home until a majority was gathered inside the MFA for Goncalves's ouster.

What now? Western dopesters are chortling too soon that leftism has been nipped in the bud, and that a new cabinet dominated by Socialists and Popular Democrats will assure stability and the unwinding of the revolutionary reel. The MFA's personnel has, in the course of a year, displayed great political instability and a tendency to switch positions and allegiances. Reporters play a silly game when they distribute identification tags to denote which officers line up with the Communist team, which with "our" team. Whatever the shortcomings of the officers' behavior, they are marching to a drummer who identifies with neither Washington nor Moscow. They passed beyond the Nasser phenomenon of an insurgent military elite by seeking to draw masses into the revolutionary proceedings. They made an alliance of sorts with Communist politicos, but have not thereby relinquished their independence or the levers of power.

Now a new majority has been whipped up, animated by an opportunistic desire to appease the Western allies and to disarm the Socialist opposition. But many in this new majority insist that they still mean to go through with a revolutionary program—moreover, any attempt to undo the nationalizations or return seized estates to former owners would set off a series of explosions on the Left. Consequently, what is to be anticipated is not a fundamental stabilization but a period of mini-crises until a new balance is struck. There has been talk of a Chilean outcome. It is all speculative, of course, but I do not believe that, in the urban masses' and armed forces' present mood, a rightist military dictator can emerge. I think that, were he to appear, he would be disposed of in rapid order as Spinola was isolated and chewed up. If the present squabbling and fumbling go on for another year or eighteen months—until people become disillusioned and weary of the game—it may be another story. The regime may in time simply subside into a variation of welfare statism and in that case we can expect that Portugal will get no greater play in *The New York Times* than it received in the long years of Salazar fascism, and that Kissinger, preoccupied with more pressing matters, will cease to issue fatuous, tongue-in-cheek warnings to Russia to stop interfering in Portugal's internal affairs.

On the economic side, the situation is serious but not the catastrophe that has been pictured, and it is unlikely that it will immediately affect political dispositions. Although Portugal is a major colonial power, it is the poorest country in Western Europe. Its per capita consumption was last reported by the OECD as $580 a year (compared to $720 in Spain, $1,040 in Ireland and $1,210 in Italy) and, like Turkey and Yugoslavia, it is a major exporter of manpower, probably a million workers having emigrated in the past decade. When the MFA inherited the government, Portugal was already in the grip of hyperinflation (33 per cent in the six months before the coup), declining industrial activity and sizable adverse trade and payments balances. The downward trends continue. Prices are going up, if more slowly; 250,000 are unemployed, 8 per cent of the work force; production is down 6 per cent from a year ago; and the deficit in outside balances is running higher, so that current exchange reserves will be exhausted by the end of the year, leaving only the gold reserves. Emigrant remittances, which accounted for some two-thirds of import receipts and almost 10 per cent of total income, have dropped sharply because of unemployment in Western Europe and uncertainties within Portugal. Tourism has fared even worse; Lisbon's splendiferous Ritz Hotel is a morgue, the Sheraton is half empty.

Very little of these difficulties can be ascribed to governmental mismanagement. Some of it is due to the world depression; for the rest, revolutions, before they can reconstruct the economic and social order are, inevitably, disorganizers of an economy. They frighten the propertied classes and invite its resistance before they displace or co-opt it. The anomaly of the Portuguese revolution has not been its extremism or doctrinairism but that it has garnered the worst of two worlds: it has shaken the confidence of the old economic elites without actually inaugurating any of the Socialist enterprises on which it has expatiated verbally.

Its actual program was moderate by New Deal or British Labourite standards. The basic law promulgated in May set the minimum wage at $132 a month, with some exemptions permitted. Even this modest reform guaranted an 11 per cent increase to civil service employees and 40 per cent increase to agricultural and food employees, affecting, in all, a third of the workers. At the same time, wages above $300 a month were frozen, in tandem with a price and rent freeze. In the first months after the takeover, there were widespread strikes for wage increases and improvements in working conditions. According to the best estimates, average basic wages rose about 25 per cent—which, if true, did not bring the recipients quite even with the rise in prices. But the strikes panicked a business

Pierotti

Antonio de Spinola

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community that was unaccustomed to such carryings-on. While there are no reliable figures, the percentage of strikes was probably far lower than in the United States in 1936-37 or 1945-46. The horrendous reports, printed in high indignation by Western journals, of a manager who was locked up in his office in one strike, or of a production slowdown in another dispute, even if accurate, were tame affairs compared to the capital-labor confrontations we experienced not so many years ago. Aside from the nationalizations in March of this year, and the earlier agricultural reform measure, the government adopted no further basic reforms. However, in June it called for an end to new wage demands and urged the mobilization of labor for greater production efforts to ameliorate economic difficulties. It was this program for peace on the labor front while most enterprises remain privately owned that brought down maledictions on the MFA's head from the far Left.

Ironically, the backwardness of the Portuguese economy is what insulates it from the worst shocks of its difficult international position. Almost 30 per cent of the population is still engaged in agriculture, and this remains so antiquated that yields per acre of wheat are half of those in Italy and even far below those of Spain. On the roads, along with speeding and wildly careening automobiles, one sees donkey carts leisurely guided by peasants who dress and look like Hollywood extras in a period movie shot in Latin America. In the small, picturesque hillside townships, strung along narrow cobblestone streets, one similarly comes across the blending of epochs a century apart. This curious coexistence of old and new, oxen and hand plows alongside tractors and tanks, the world's foremost multinational corporations alongside innumerable work places employing ten workers or fewer, gives the country a self-sufficiency and an ability to roll with the punches despite the high export and import figures as percentages of the entire economy. And the weight of tradition in Portugal is at bottom the reason for the stalling of the revolution. This makes it unlikely that Portugal will find the inner resources to roll its thunder across Europe again—unless and until its dour Spanish neighbor decides once more to astonish the world, as it did forty years ago. □

FISHERMEN BE DAMNED

WRITING OFF AN INDUSTRY

ROBERT A. KOLBE

Henry Kissinger's attempt to quash the unilateral 200-mile offshore limit now before Congress will, if effective, throw the fate of a measure intended to save our almost dead fishing industry back to the U.N.'s Law of the Sea Conference. This sporadic global confab has dragged on for two years; no end is in sight. So the curtain seems to be falling on U.S. fishing, with Kissinger providing the final tug and flourish to the heartless government fisheries policy of the last thirty years.

He lobbied against the pending 200-mile U.S. fishing zone bills at the Montreal meeting of the American Bar Association on August 11. He prefers whatever solution comes eventually from the Law of the Sea Conference as a concession to other countries, including developing nations, so that they will allow multinational companies to mine the oceans.

Another concession proposed at Montreal for the same reason is the creation of an international organization which would mine the seas for the developing nations. A third concession is "an agreed statement of basic principle," drafted up by all nations, to regulate ocean mining by multinational corporations.

In the past, the United States traded off our fisheries for military bases abroad. Now Kissinger is using our oldest industry as a pawn to gain his objective of sea bed mineral rights for giant U.S. industries. Fishermen be damned.

With this said, it might be well to review just what has happened since World War II to our once-robust fishing fleets vis-à-vis the rest of the fishing nations. If our fishermen founder, the United States can blame itself.

For this country, through the Marshall Plan, made possible the modernization of the fishing fleets of Western Europe. At the same time, the United States hastened the demise of our fishing industry by refusing any real aid to fishermen. With U.S. funds, other countries gave their fleets the boost they needed to build new boats. They did it through loans and outright grants. Some countries built more boats than they needed.

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, which has codified the financial assistance that nations make available to fleets, says that most governments recognized that financial help to build fishing boats was vitally important because, "The fishery industry in developed countries was not an attractive field for investment." That is, venture capital is seldom forthcoming from outside the industry. "No doubt," FAO continues, "the inherent hazards of fishing, the dependence on fishery resources of relatively unknown size and habits, as well as the vicissitudes of the weather, have all been contributing factors."

U.S. fishermen tell of the difficulty of getting government loans, which are not much more favorable than bank loans. Some have hired lobbyists to try for government assistance, but without success. Foreign-built boats are now available at lower cost than new U.S.-built boats, but the law prohibits their purchase in this country. Fishermen speak of fine, almost new boats that cannot be touched. They are berthed not far from our New England fishing ports—just across the border in Canada. "Canadian side

Robert Kolbe, associate editor of Purchasing Magazine *and former waterfront editor of the Gloucester (Mass.)* Daily Times, *is working on a book,* Burial at Sea, *on the U.S. fishing industry.*

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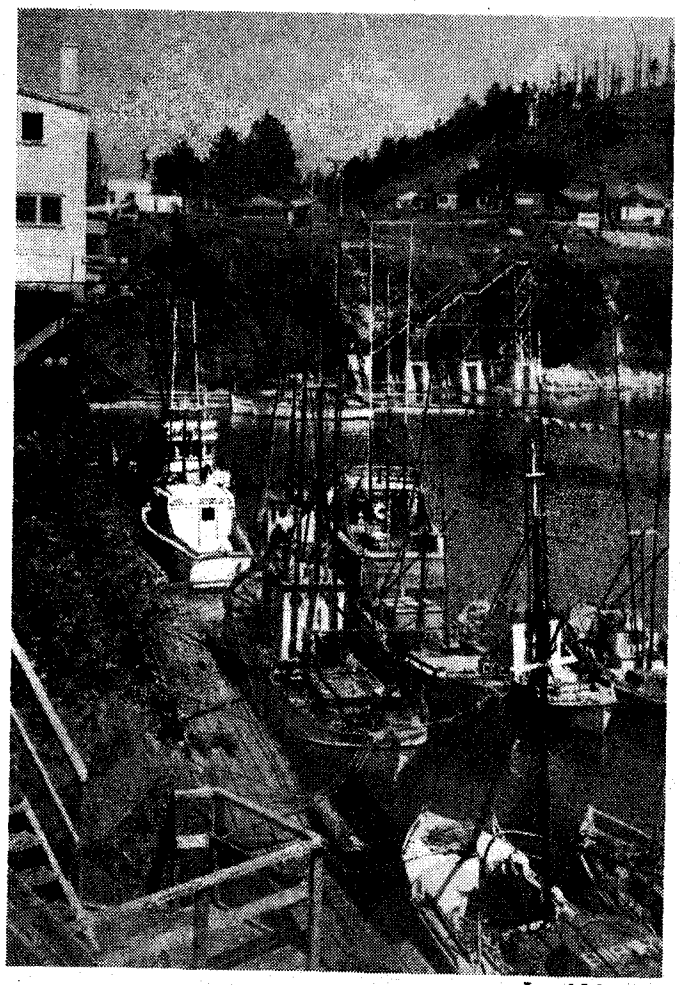
trawlers, five to ten years old, are tied up because their fishermen bought new stern trawlers," one Gloucester fishing captain explains.

FAO says this of the ground-fish industry of eastern Canada and New England in its publication, *Financial Assistance Policies and Administration for Fisheries Industries*: "The producers in both countries must remain competitive with European exporters to North American markets. The objective of financial aid policies, consequently, is to promote the rationalization and modernization of fishing operations."



Josef Muench

See what European nations do for their fleets:

Great Britain and Italy probably lead the Western nations in helping fishermen to get new boats. England gives outright grants of up to 30 per cent of the cost of a new vessel. At the same time, it provides a low-interest loan for another 50 per cent of the vessel's cost, leaving only 20 per cent to be financed privately. These and other statistics about Western nations' vessel aid come from *Fishery Policies in Western Europe and North America*, published by the Organization for European Economic Cooperation.

Italy promotes modernization of the fleet of southern Italy (mostly Sicily) by giving outright grants of 40 per cent of the cost of vessels, as well as low-interest loans. Four-fifths of the Italian fishing fleet is centered in southern Italy. France gives outright grants and loans. Germany provides loans, credits and favorable interest rates, as does Norway, which also provides a guaranteed minimum weekly wage for fishermen. Except for Japan and Russia in the East, Portugal is probably the nation most solicitous for its fisheries. Portuguese government agencies help draw plans "aimed at making the fleet more efficient." Long-term, low-interest government loans are usual.

Finally, Spain makes government loans for new boats to highly organized fishermen's cooperatives. It also provides a vast Social Security system for fishermen.

Here in the United States, what have we? Our New England fleet is less than half the size it was in 1950. Since then, world demand for fish—especially frozen fish—has zoomed by thousands of per cent. But now our fleets can hardly provide the fresh fish required for our gourmet seacoast restaurants. *All* the frozen fish sold in U.S. supermarkets is imported in frozen blocks by huge freighters. Leading processors, like Gorton's of Gloucester, rely entirely on imported fish. We are writing off a once proud industry. □

WHOSE OX IS GORED?

INCOME SHARES AND RECOVERY

WILLIAM K. TABB

The debate over economic policy which has prevailed during most of the 1974-75 recession-*cum*-depression has almost completely avoided any real inquiry into the causes of the crisis. Instead, it stresses proposals for recovery. The discussion is in essentials the same one that occurred in each of the half-dozen postwar recessions. That the specifics of this downturn were more depressing than any since the Great Depression insured a prolonged, if not a profound, debate on economic policy.

In the liberal-conservative battle over what road to take three intertwined issues are at stake. The first is the question of federal spending. Conservatives are fighting a rear-guard action against deficits and big government, with even President Ford, who frequently calls for less government spending as the way to cure all economic ills, committed to a sizable deficit for the duration of his first term. Hardly sizable enough, say the liberals. The question is

William Tabb, associate professor of economics at Queens College (CUNY), is the author of The Political Economy of the Black Ghetto (*W. W. Norton*).

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how to overcome "fiscal acrophobia," a phrase we owe to Walter Heller. He wanted a lot of deficit to make up for the "fiscal drag" of the automatic increases in effective tax rates, which came not from new legislation or higher real earnings but because inflation pushed people into higher tax brackets as their incomes rose.

A second issue is who would benefit from transfers of federal income sources. Should tax cuts be given to low-income, working-class families and the most hard-pressed? The conservative position here was well expressed in a *Wall Street Journal* editorial about the "iron laws of economics" and how hard truth really should come ahead of soft-headed compassion. While the Democrats call for more income transfers to the poor, some of whom are literally starving and freezing because they can no longer afford food or heating oil, the *Journal* warns of the effects of such a policy:

> Just so everyone will understand, we are not presenting an argument here on behalf of the powerful and against the weak. We are simply saying that measures to combat the current *inflationary recession* have to concentrate on getting the productive to produce. The poor and weak will not benefit by being given a larger piece of a constantly shrinking pie.

The third key issue in the debate concerns the so-called "crowding out" problem and the need to channel more money to private investment.

The three are interrelated and all are manifestations on the one hand of the continuous class struggle between capital and labor, and on the other of disagreements between more liberal and more conservative Establishment interests. The popular press stresses the second type of quarrel and pretty much denies the class nature of social conflicts.

In this period of crisis each policy debate has been informed by a larger pessimistic frame of reference. In the darker moments of the crises of the mid-1970s, both the popular press and important social scientists (Samuel Huntington and Robert Heilbroner among others) have put forward a most dismal vision of the future, offering policy implications calling for a drastic reduction in our standard of living along with a far more authoritarian form of government to force these austerity measures. Leading liberals suggest that democracy is a luxury we can no longer afford. Such discussions for the intellectuals were matched with a "guilting" of the masses.

Shortages of wheat and energy, the disruption of phone service and electricity brown-outs have started a neo-Malthusianism among some social scientists. Whether it is food triage or tripling the price of gasoline, midway into the 1970s the public is being told that "We've had it too good." It is said that the days of cheap energy and inexpensive food are over. We are told that we will have greatly to reduce our expectations. Fewer of us can have the golden opportunities America has always promised—the two cars, the air-conditioned house with a swimming pool, the power boat and the snowmobile. Of course few of us ever did have them, but now there are just not enough natural resources, and even our dreams must be scaled down.

Such talk has become almost a sort of conservative chic. Idealists can worry about feeding the hungry, but hard-headed realists know there is little that can be done. The hungry, sad but true, will have to starve or stop reproducing so fast. The much-repeated facts (the United States, with 5 per cent of the world's population, uses almost half the world's energy, and about the same proportion of the planet's nonreplenishable resources), once recited to urge a rethinking of our economic system's consumer waste, have come to be used in a new way. What if the Burmese and Costa Ricans want to live like us? There isn't enough of anything to allow it. They must slow their population growth and lower their expectations. Even if we were generous we couldn't feed India, let alone the rest of Southeast Asia, Africa, Latin America and the other hungry parts of the world. Nor will the resources of the planet permit these nations to develop economically along the industrial path the West has taken. Where are the resources for the billions of cars and the oil to drive them? We abandon the world to its own devices. We can do nothing to help that would really make a difference, and besides it's their own fault and the cost to us would be staggering. So goes conservative chic.

Indeed, it is said that workers at home are getting too fat. "We" need to live simpler lives. Dan Dorfman suggests that Melvin Laird write a series of articles for *Reader's Digest* (reprints to accompany unemployment and welfare checks) explaining the problem. The good life is over. (At least for those who aren't rich enough. In the great slump of 1974-75, Cadillac production has increased significantly. Clearly "we" don't suffer equally.) The quintessence of conservative chic is to be found in Andrew Tobias's "Greatly Reduced Expectations: Can America Find Happiness at 55 M.P.H.?" in *New York Magazine*, where he advocates among other things a wage freeze, but not a price freeze, restoring the draft to "provide a new source of cheap labor" and forcing those who receive unemployment checks to work at tasks needed by the nation. For his part, Tobias has found that a New York floor-through apartment is surprisingly bearable without air conditioning in the summer and a little spaghetti hasn't killed him. The overall effect of such purposefully outrageous writing is, I think, to convince people that they will never have it so good again and that they should stop grousing. Things will get worse and there's not much anyone can do about it.

Such views are being expressed with greater and greater frequency not just by conservative columnists and politicians but by an increasing number of nominally progressive trade unionists. Consider the following statement by Sol Fishko, president of the International Printing and Graphic Communications Union:

> All indications point to a basic change in our way of life. Once we could count on our abundance of raw materials to fuel an expanding economy. Now we must conserve what is left to maintain what we have.
>
> As a consequence, difficult choices will have to be made. Adjustments in our living standards will be forced on us, and conflicts between special interests will be intensified.

Fishko sees solutions in two areas. First, cut down waste. ("We must decide if it makes sense to drive a car that guzzles a gallon of gas for every 10 air-polluting miles it travels.") He calls for turning off unnecessary lights, refusing to accept superfluous packaging, possibly con-

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suming more grain, less beef, and other voluntary actions. But in his view individual initiative, while necessary, is not enough. There must be "planned allocation of our dwindling resources." And he concludes: "The challenge will be in achieving acceptable results within the framework of our democratic institutions."

Such doomsday thinking has occurred in the past whenever living conditions have dramatically deteriorated. There is nothing fundamentally new in the current situation to warrant such gloom. There are ways to handle social factors which, while they require extensive changes in the way the political economy is organized and controlled, can deal effectively with our needs. The first task is to examine questions of income distribution, to get a picture of what is really happening, and then to examine the struggle between labor and capital over shares.

The problem of shortages must be seen in the context of the constant overextension and undershooting of the production that can be profitably sold. The downturn of the mid-1970s was manifestly the result of a severe drop in consumer purchasing power. As the chief economist of the Mellon National Bank said in the summer of 1974, the drop in real pay had been "entirely unprecedented" in the postwar period and led to an "alarming" situation.

By the summer of 1974 those debating whether or not the country was in a recession, and if so, what was causing it, had to face up to the way the economy was losing steam. The decline in real personal expenditures was leading the economy downward. That is, labor had been so successfully "zapped" by wage controls that real consumer spending had fallen far more and far earlier in the downturn than it had in other recessions. The largest component of spending—nondurables—dropped most dramatically, as price increases of food and fuel forced down overall consumption. Some analysts chose not to worry, since "only" consumers were being hurt. As the August 1974 *Citibank Newsletter* said: "Skeptics point out there is as yet little evidence of an adverse impact on capital-goods spending, and they argue that a downturn that's largely confined to personal consumption isn't a recession. But it's difficult to believe that such a sharp decline in real consumer spending will leave the other sectors of economic activity unscathed." Inventories did in fact begin to pile up. Inflation meant that real profits lagged behind nominal money profits. Excessive inventories meant cutbacks on new orders.

Leading the inflation of 1974 was tax payments, which rose faster than all other price increases, doing greater harm to low-income and middle-income taxpayers than to the wealthy. For a family at the Bureau of Labor Statistics intermediate level (an income of $14,466 in 1974) food prices rose by about 12 per cent, housing by 13.5 per cent and transportation costs by more than 14 per cent. However, personal income taxes paid in 1974 went up by 26.5 per cent and the Social Security tax by 21.6 per cent.

In 1953, when the income of the average family was $5,000, 12 per cent of that amount went for taxes. That same year, a family with four times the average, or $20,000, paid about 20 per cent of its income in taxes. In 1974, the average income in this country was up to $13,000, but people at that level were paying 23 per cent of their income in taxes, almost double the rate a comparable family paid in 1953. Yet a family earning four times the average ($52,000) paid only 29.5 per cent—a far smaller increase. (Data from the Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations.)

The tax picture became very important as a redistributive mechanism. Since the business attack has been at the point of production—in speed-ups, stretch-outs and cutting real wages—it is easy to forget this second arena of class struggle, redistribution through the state. Two years of 14 per cent inflation brings the equivalent of a 3 per cent tax increase (without inflation) because people get pushed into higher tax brackets. Those most hurt are low-income workers who before inflation paid little tax. As inflation proceeds, the already inadequate personal exemptions and standard deductions are worth even less because they are fixed in dollar amounts and the dollar has dropped in value. Middle-income people also feel the pinch because the tax brackets which affect them are fairly narrow and the increases in tax burden as they move to higher brackets are large.

The way the government collects taxes is not widely understood by most citizens. Consider Social Security deductions. Since you don't have any choice about paying them and do not necessarily ever receive anything back, and since you could go out and buy a better retirement plan for less than half as much, many economists look at the Social Security tax as one of the most unjust taxes we pay. More than half of all American taxpayers give more each year to the Social Security Administration than they pay to the Internal Revenue Service. Lower-income workers are hit especially hard. A husband and wife who together earn $20,000 pay more a year in Social Security tax than does a $100,000-a-year executive.

In 1974, the Social Security tax, at a rate of 5.85 per cent each for employee and employer, on a new high $13,200 taxable wage base, came to $772.20, compared with $374.40 only five years ago and $468 only three years ago.

In overall terms, the importance of the tax has become even more startling. Social Security taxes represented almost 25 per cent of all federal taxes in 1974, as against less than 3.5 per cent in 1947 and 8.5 per cent in 1957. These taxes will take more than 6 per cent of the national income in 1974, in contrast to less than 1 per cent in 1947 and less than 2 per cent in 1957.

In fact, regressive payroll and excise taxes are the sources of 35 per cent of the government's tax collection; income taxes are 42 per cent. Corporate taxes are down to 14 per cent of the total. And while in 1953 corporations paid 37 per cent of their income (or what they declared as income), by 1969 they were paying less than 30 per cent. That is an average—many large firms are finding ways to pay far less.

Wealthy individuals have done the same. In 1952 the wealthiest 1 per cent of taxpayers paid 33 per cent of their declared income to the government. By 1967 they had managed to reduce their payments to 26 per cent. Since the regressive payroll tax had increased more than 600 per cent since 1954 and property and sales taxes had more than doubled, we are not doing as well. In fact, as the rich pay less and government expenditures keep rising, the less

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privileged must pay more. In 1954 corporate taxes were one-third of all taxes paid. They are now a sixth and serious efforts are underway to do away with corporate income taxation altogether!

Two kinds of comparison are interesting in this regard. First, the top 5 per cent of American families receive about one-third of all income. That is more than goes to the two-thirds of families who receive less than $12,000 a year. The type of home shown in TV commercials, and in most entertainment programs as well, is far beyond the means of most of us. However, the constant display of such kitchens and life styles conveys the sense that that is how America lives.

Most citizens do understand at some level that the rich escape their fair share of taxes but they also suppose that the better-off middle class does not. This leads many to think that the middle class pays a much greater proportion of its income in taxes than do lower earners. It is not true. The most oppressed group of taxpayers is the solidly working-class families above dire poverty but below middle-class comforts. In 1966, a year for which comprehensive figures are available, a family with total income of $8,000 (including fringe benefits) paid a bit more than 17 per cent of its income in federal taxes and just less than 9 per cent in state and local taxes, a total of 26 per cent. A better-off middle-class family (in 1966) with an $18,500 income paid 17.5 per cent in federal taxes and 7.5 per cent in state and local taxes—a total of only 25 per cent. At the same time, a family with an income of $75,000 was paying the same percentage burden as the $8,000 family (26 per cent). That was because for such a wealthy family, while their federal bite was 20 per cent, their state and local tax rate was only 6 per cent.

One effect of the economic downturn of the mid-1970s has been to make things far worse for those living on welfare. Not only have the rampages of inflation meant real declines in the purchasing power of welfare recipients' incomes but state governments, themselves hard-pressed, have cut benefits, forced people off the rolls, and held up payments, hoping that delays would discourage applicants. Yet the crisis of the 1970s has had an even more insidious effect. With more than 9 per cent as the official unemployment rate, labor unrest is growing. Many of those who formerly complained of welfare chiselers are themselves unemployed, taxes are rising, disillusion with the system is setting in and it has become helpful to the *status quo* for a somewhat different attitude toward the welfare population to be implemented at the policy level. Not through any conspiracy but out of frustration on the one hand and fiscal exigency on the other, people most needing help have been further oppressed by the welfare system. HEW in a November 4, 1974 policy statement ended the ban on using federal relief moneys to fund work-relief programs, a policy which had been in effect since 1935. States could now compel welfare recipients to accept unpaid public sector jobs to "work off" their meager benefits.

Federal welfare and job creation policy pits the poor and unemployed against the municipal work force. As city workers are laid off, federal funds are to hire the long-term unemployed and welfare recipients. This government-sponsored union-busting sets one group of workers against another, accentuating ethnic and racial antagonisms, fostering intra-class strife and diverting attention from the real causes of the urban fiscal crisis.

Since hierarchy and differential privilege are necessary to the preservation of a class system, as conditions of the working class deteriorate it becomes essential that the standard of living of the surplus population of the unemployed fall correspondingly. The current crisis has meant acute malnutrition, constant suffering and premature death. The poor have lost a larger percentage of "real" purchasing power because of sharp increases in the price of food, fuel, utilities and housing. Since 1971, the prices of goods which predominate in the budget of the poor have risen 23 per cent, while the prices of goods purchased to a larger degree by other sectors of the population have risen 20 per cent. The poor have no "cushion" in their budget. In 1972 and 1973, many were already eating low-cost staple foods. In 1973 prices of these foods soared: white bread by 28 per cent, potatoes 44 per cent, flour 58 per cent, rice 100 per cent and dried beans 103 per cent. "While the affluent may cut down on vacations, the poor cut out shoes, warm clothes, and health care for their children," says Joan Miller, summarizing the "General Views" of the White House Summit on the effect of inflation on the poor.

One participant in this conference said, "Those who set priorities in fighting inflation must take into account their impact on *people*, not just abstract economic indices." But of course it is all a matter of opinion. In the 1975 *Economic Report of the President,* Mr. Ford said:

> Transfer payments to individuals by the federal government have increased, after adjustment for inflation, by almost 9 per cent annually during the past two decades. A continuation of this trend for the next two decades, along with only modest increases in other federal expenditures and in those of state and local governments, would lift the expenditures by government at all levels from about one-third of the gross national product to more than one-half. Spending on this scale would require a substantial increase in the tax burden on the average American family. This could easily stifle the incentive and enterprise which is essential to continued improvements in productivity and in our standard of living.

President Ford also complained of the way these domestic assistance programs have grown in a "largely unplanned, piecemeal fashion." This statement is certainly true. The programs are piecemeal and exceedingly ineffective in their coverage.

Thirty-one per cent of the work force, according to the Department of Labor, are covered by no unemployment benefits; if unemployed, they must live off savings and charity. The 62 million covered workers mostly receive unemployment compensation, administered by the states and paying an average of $59 a week for from twenty-six to thirty-nine weeks (before the extra extensions).

Only 38 per cent of those eligible for food stamps receive them—20 million people who are eligible don't, and applying to buy food stamps each month requires, in many places, getting on lines before dawn or having to come back the next day. (See report of the Senate Select Committee on Nutrition and Human Needs, March 1975.)

The Ford administration's proposed fiscal 1976 budget

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and the general tenor of the President's message to the Congress accompanying it, make clear however that these abuses are not what he has in mind. The conservative implications of fiscal federalism and the centralizing of power in the hands of the executive branch which accompanies such a reform are to be found in a different direction.

The President suggested that his budget "carries forward a philosophy that stresses an appropriate separation of public- and private-sector responsibilities. Within the sphere of public-sector responsibilities, it calls for federal emphasis on meeting national problems and encourages state and local responsibility and initiative in meeting local and statewide needs." In practice the shift in federal-local relations translates into a 17 per cent budget cut in social services in the face of rising inflation and increased need. In terms of the relation between private and public sectors the effect is the same. The President paints a bleak future and calls for a responsible reduction of domestic assistance programs:

> Spending by all levels of government now makes up a third of our national output. Were the growth of domestic assistance programs to continue for the next two decades at the same rates as in the last twenty years, total government spending would grow to more than half of our national output. We cannot permit this to occur. Taxation of individuals and businesses to pay for such expansion would simply become insupportably heavy. This is not a matter of conservative or liberal ideology. It is hard fact, easily demonstrated by simple extrapolation. We must begin to limit the rate of growth of our budgetary commitments in the domestic area to sustainable levels.

The President and his economists did nothing more than echo the line of the business press. In an editorial, "The Transfer Payment Explosion," *The Wall Street Journal* complained bitterly of the $150 billion plus in transfer payments "for which no services are rendered." All this aid to victims of black-lung disease, in food stamps and unemployment compensation to those without work "was breaking the economy." Any serious attempt to solve the nation's economic problems must focus on this "explosion" of transfer payments.

But why were transfer payments rising so fast? Because the private sector was unable to provide jobs and pay scales required for minimal needs. In fiscal 1974 the unemployed received $6.1 billion in direct assistance from the government; in fiscal 1976 they would receive three times that amount—or rather a vastly increased number of unemployed would be receiving benefits (14.2 million compared to 6.6 million). The explosion of transfer payments was the result of the White House-created record unemployment levels.

The point of the Ford budget and tax proposals was that in a time of crisis the only way out is to pay off the private sector with enough incentives so that it will start hiring workers and get the show on the road again. Of course, if working people and unemployed were helped directly with tax cuts and direct job creation, with increased public spending for housing, health and food, corporations would have incentive to produce to meet increased demand as well. There is a Left Keynesian as well as a right-wing conservative way to stimulate a capitalist economy. Such dangerous ideas have, however, long been resisted by the business community—in fact before Keynes even wrote *The General Theory*. As one leading spokesperson for capital said:

> This country cannot continue to advance prices and wages, to curtail production, to expand credits, and to attempt to enrich itself by nonproductive operations and transactions without fostering discontent and radicalism.
>
> There is a worldwide lack of capital, and with calls upon the investment market which cannot be met, there is an unprecedented demand for bank credits.

This contemporary sounding statement is from a speech by W.F.G. Harding, then chairman of the Federal Reserve Board, delivered in May of 1920!

Today the same argument is made in the more sophisticated terminology of "crowding out." The idea is that when the government tries to finance a large deficit by selling bonds to the public, it "crowds out" private borrowers who also need funds to invest in plants and equipment and families seeking mortgage money for homes. If, for example, banks have little in excess reserves and the government runs a $35-billion deficit, savings will have to increase to generate money for the new borrowing. For the last twenty-five years the savings rate has varied between about 5 and 8 per cent of the GNP. Earlier in 1975, when it seemed that the deficit would be smaller, it was estimated that to raise an additional $35 billion beyond what would have been forthcoming required an 11 per cent saving rate. *The Wall Street Journal* expressed editorial concern, venturing the view that "somewhere between a federal deficit of $50 billion and a federal deficit of $80 billion, the string snaps." This is in part, they allege, because the money just isn't there, or if it is, it would come from a dramatic decrease in funds available to investors, and that would mean loss of jobs in the private sector. Of course the government could just print the required money, but that would be pure inflation. However, the Treasury estimates that monetizing the bulk of the deficit would drive the prime rate to 20 per cent.

Joseph A. Peckman, the director of economic studies at the Brookings Institution, argues on the contrary that while "Most responsible estimates of our capital requirements find that they will indeed be large," they are not out of line with past saving and investment ratios in periods of high employment. In fact, as Peckman points out, "the level of private investment during the past decade has been extremely high by any standard," in 1973 and 1974, "close to a post-World War II peak," and very high indeed for the decade 1965-74. Certainly "there is no evidence in the figures that investment has been lagging in recent years or that the tax system has been a drag on investment."

According to Peckman's estimates, "Even at the high level of capital needs projected for the next five years, the ratio of private investment to gross national product will need to be only slightly higher in 1980 than the level it reached in 1973," and to finance this investment would require only 0.5 per cent of the GNP federal budget surplus at a 4 per cent unemployment rate. It may be presumed that if unemployment is not down to 4 per cent, which it well may not be, investment plans will be scaled down and hence capital requirements will be lower.

Peckman is also one of the few prominent economists to raise basic questions about the religion of growth and the correctness of trying to match European and Japanese investment rates. Not only is our capital-labor ratio far

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higher than theirs, with the high levels elsewhere being in part an effort to catch up, but incremental ratios may not bring commensurate advance in GNP growth. At a deeper level Peckman asserts: "Whether we should invest more and grow a little faster depends on our evaluation of the benefits of growth as compared to the costs. I strongly disagree with those who believe that growth should be halted for environmental or other reasons. But I also disagree with those who want to increase growth at the expense of other urgent national priorities and at the expense of equity in the tax system." While the rhetorical device of not being an extremist on environmental issues, in order to seem more reasonable in demanding greater tax equity, is a debater's device that one may frown upon as a general tactic, the thrust of Peckman's remarks is to the heart of the matter. The allegation that a serious capital shortage requires a revamping of our tax system in a manner that redistributes income to capital is unsubstantiated, and although he would not be so crude as to say so directly, a rip-off of the working class in favor of the high-income recipients. To economists like Peckman, the system is capable of being reformed to encourage enough growth without increasing inequities. He feels that tax procedures could be reformed and in a way that would do no damage to private property relations. In fact such redistribution, by strengthening the social fiber, would defuse tensions and increase the stability of the system. One can doubt that such fundamental contradictions can be so easily finessed, but still accept his analysis that the crowding-out people are seeking an unnecessary pro-capital redistribution.

The debates now raging in Washington on the proper road to recovery are in fact disagreements over fundamental questions of how income and wealth are to be distributed in our society. President Ford and his conservative allies argue a hard line toward the victims of the current crisis and higher taxes on wage income to subsidize capital. Liberals, for the most part, have been on the defensive, stressing the need for a looser monetary policy and more federal spending. Each side prefers to pretend that it is just talking about recovery policy options. It would be much easier, however, to follow the debates if participants would come out and explain that what they are really talking about is how to achieve a recovery which favors a certain change in the distribution of income. One would think the liberals, at least, have little to lose from such honesty. □

Lay Judges: The Illiterate Bench

BRYAN WOOLLEY

We will not make any justiciaries, constables, sheriffs or bailiffs, but from those who understand the law of the realm and are well disposed to observe it. —Magna Carta

Louisville, Ky.

The U.S. Supreme Court has agreed to hear this fall arguments in *Lonnie North* v. *C.B. Russell and Nathaniel "Trap" Helton, Jailer of Harlan County.* If the Justices rule in favor of North, they will force reform of the lower courts of the thirty-six states in which citizens without training in the law are empowered to sit as justices of the peace, magistrates and police judges.

The case began on a warm Appalachian night in July 1974, when Eugene Goss, a lawyer in Harlan, Ky., got a phone call from Eli North, a worried man. North's 23-year-old son, Lonnie, had been arrested and charged with driving while intoxicated. The city judge of Lynch, a small coal-mining town in Harlan County, had that night refused to grant him the jury trial he had demanded, had sentenced him to thirty days in jail, had fined him $150, had revoked his driver's license and had ordered him hauled immediately to a cell in the county seat.

Goss took the case. He bailed out Lonnie North and immediately petitioned the Harlan Circuit Court for a writ of *habeas corpus*, on the ground that Lynch City Judge C.B. Russell "lacked the competency and legal capacity to sit as a judge" in the prosecution of North. During the *habeas corpus* hearing, Goss put Russell on the stand:

Goss: Are you familiar with the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, as to what it provides?

Russell: Yes, sir.

Goss: What does that provide?

Russell: Right off hand, I don't . . . . Something about judicial. I think one of them is judicial procedure or something or another. I'm not for sure.

Goss: Do you think the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States deals with judicial procedure?

Russell: Right off hand, Mr. Goss, I couldn't tell you.

Goss: Are you familiar with the term "due process of law" or "equal protection of the law"?

Russell: Yes, sir.

Goss: In legal meaning?

Russell: No, that's beyond me.

Goss: Are you familiar with the rights accorded to a defendant as accused in a criminal case under the Fourteenth Amendment of the Constitution of the United States of America?

Russell: Mr. Goss, as I previous said, I don't know, exactly understand this Fourteenth Amendment. I know part of it.

Later, Goss questioned the judge about Kentucky law: "Are you familiar with the statutes of the Commonwealth of Kentucky relating to the empaneling of a petit jury, the qualifications of a petit jury and the selection of a petit jury in a particular criminal case?" *Russell*: "Well, I think I know some of the qualifications, but as far as all of them, I don't.

Bryan Woolley is on the news staff of the Louisville Courier-Journal. *He is the author of a novel,* Some Sweet Day (*Random House*) *and of* We Be Here When the Morning Comes (*University Press of Kentucky*), *a documentary on the 1973-74 strike at the Brookside Coal Mine, Harlan County.*

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Then Russell was questioned about the decisions of the U.S. Supreme Court:

Goss: Are you familiar with the Supreme Court reports of the United States Supreme Court?

Russell: I'm familiar with some of them, but I don't agree with all of them.

Goss: What is your understanding with respect to the effect that a judge should give between conflicting rulings made by the Kentucky Court of Appeals and the Supreme Court of the United States? Do you understand the question?

Russell: No, I really don't. I don't think I know. If it would go to the Supreme Court from the Kentucky Court of Appeals? Is that what you're referring to?

Goss: Yes.

Russell: Well, I just don't. . . . As I say, there's a lot of cases the Supreme Court rules on I don't agree.

Goss: Are you a licensed lawyer?

Russell: No, sir.

Goss: Judge, is it fair to say that you have only a very vague knowledge of the criminal law of the Commonwealth of Kentucky and of the United States of America with respect to the constitutional and statutory rights that a defendant has, and with respect to criminal procedures in criminal law as it relates to crimes? Is that a fair statement?

Russell: I'd say . . . no, I'd say I've got very little as far as background, but I've got a whole lot of common sense, Mr. Goss.

The education of Judge Russell, whom Goss calls "one of the better magistrates in Harlan County," ended with a high school diploma. Before he became a judge, he was assistant foreman at a coal mine. Goss argued that to be tried before such a judge is to be denied the due process of law guaranteed under the Fourteenth Amendment.

Both the circuit court and the Kentucky Court of Appeals, the state's highest tribunal, refused to grant North relief. In its unanimous decision last March, the Court of Appeals declared: "We fully appreciate the absurdity of having a lawsuit—any lawsuit—presided over in this day and age by a person without legal training or experience. Nevertheless, it was our conclusion . . . that the federal Constitution does not deny the people the right to have it that way if they so desire."

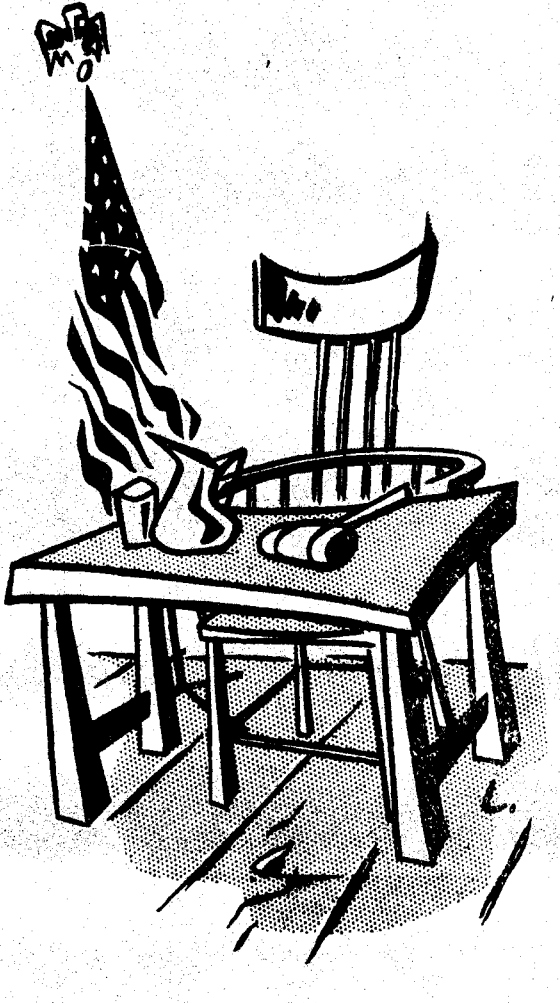
It is true that the Constitution does not set forth educational requirements for judges, including Supreme Court Justices. Goss hopes that *North* v. *Russell* will result in some kind of minimum standard for the nation.

"I don't try to predict what the Supreme Court is going to do," he says, "but Lonnie North was sent to jail without a trial. He was not advised of his rights, he did not have counsel, he did not get to call witnesses, he did not get a jury trial. He's under judgment of incarceration without benefit of any of his constitutional rights, not even the most rudimentary. The frosting on the cake is that under the statute under which he was convicted, there's no jail penalty involved. He was charged with DWI, first offense, and the only penalty provided for first-offense DWI is a fine. And this sort of thing goes on every day in Kentucky. Of more than 1,100 judges in this state, less than 100 are lawyers, and seventy-three of those are circuit judges, who are required by law to be members of the bar."

The situation is not unique to Kentucky. The lay-judge system grew up in a young country where lawyers were few, especially in rural areas such as Harlan County, where travel between settlements was slow, arduous and sometimes dangerous, and where the law—especially criminal law—was much simpler than it is today. Only fourteen states and the District of Columbia have "professionalized" their lower judiciary much beyond that frontier state. In many states, including Kentucky, the law does not demand that justices of the peace and magistrates even be able to read and write. In New York State, 81 per cent of the magistrates do not have enough education to be admitted to law school.

In 1967, the President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice noted that it is in these courts that most Americans come face to face with the law. "The lower court is usually the court of last resort," the commission said. "Ninety per cent of the nation's criminal cases are heard in the lower courts."

The brand of justice that Americans encounter there depends almost entirely on the intelligence and personality of the layman on the bench. While there are competent and fair lay judges here and there, trials before many of them range from informal to bizarre. A recent survey in California found one justice of the peace who routinely polled the courtroom audience for an "informal verdict" before announcing his own. Another justice "sniffed" the witnesses on the stand, claiming that he could tell by their scent when they were lying. Another believed that during their testimony liars and truth tellers hold their thumbs in different positions. In Montana, one



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justice of the peace, an auto mechanic, tried a case without crawling from under the car he was repairing; another, a farmer, held court from the seat of his tractor. Harlan County's Judge Russell testified that when he needs legal advice, he asks the city attorney—the prosecutor. The Manual for Justices of the Peace in the State of Utah *instructs* the judges to consult the county attorney when they are unsure of themselves.

Since these are not courts of record (no court reporter is present to make a record of the proceedings that might be used in appeal), it is impossible even to estimate how many times a day Lonnie North's experience of criminal justice is duplicated throughout the country. The interest shown in *North* v. *Russell* by attorneys who practice regularly in the lower courts has been nationwide. The Supreme Court has accepted friend-of-the-court briefs, all seconding Goss's arguments, from the Greater Up-State Law Project, which is pursuing two similar cases in New York; the American Civil Liberties Union, which is pursuing a similar case in South Carolina; the Salt Lake Legal Defenders Association, which is pursuing two similar cases in Utah; the National Legal Aid and Defender Association, whose 4,000 members represent indigent persons in criminal cases and "fear that this practice [using nonlawyer judges] has and will result in inferior justice for the poor man, who is the principal litigant in those courts"; and the prestigious American Judicature Society, whose membership includes many federal and state judges, bar leaders, law professors and government officials. The society, a long-time crusader for judicial reform, agrees with Goss that the lay-judge system "violates the due process clause of the Fourteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution and undermines the effective administration of justice."

There are signs that the Supreme Court may be ready to agree. In 1972, the Court ruled in *Argersinger* v. *Hamlin* that defendants even in misdemeanor cases have a right to legal counsel, if the accused faces the possibility of incarceration. Lonnie North's attorney believes that right is meaningless if the case is to be decided by an incompetent judge. "If a man is entitled to have a lawyer in a misdemeanor case," Goss says, "surely he ought to be entitled to have a judge who is capable by training and experience to hear the motions and the arguments made by that lawyer. Any lawyer who practices in these lower courts will tell you that our present system is hopeless. A lawyer has to be trained and licensed, and then has to present his wares before judges who don't have the slightest idea what he's talking about."

Since the arrest of Lonnie North, another arrow has been added to Goss's quiver. In August 1974, the California Supreme Court ruled in *Gordon* v. *Justice for Yuba City* that the due process clause of the Fourteenth Amendment is denied whenever a nonlawyer judge presides over a criminal case in which the defendant faces a possible jail sentence. When the California attorney general petitioned the federal Supreme Court to review the decision, the Court refused, allowing the state decision to stand.

"So now we have California saying the U.S. Constitution requires judges in criminal cases to be lawyers, and Kentucky saying it doesn't," says Goss. "But the federal Constitution is supposed to have uniform application everywhere in the country."

Obviously, his cause is one whose time has come. □

CONSUMER ACTION IN CALIFORNIA

SMOKING OUT THE BUREAUCRATS

JENNIFER CROSS

San Francisco

Can regulatory agencies ever be made actually to serve consumers instead of quietly sabotaging them in the interests of business? Many people, disgusted with the high cost and poor record of state and federal government, shrug this off as a Sisyphean task, but a sustained push by some California groups suggests it is well worth trying. While the two-year campaign to transform the state Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA) and the agricultural marketing order boards is only starting to pay off, there are signs that a significant change may be underway.

As usual, the process began with an exposé. A young research team from Consumer Action in San Francisco, headed by Neil Gendel, Mike Schulman and John Geesman, spent eight months discreetly poking about in the state goverment in Sacramento. Their conclusion, published one year ago in a book called *Deceptive Packaging*, was that "in terms of its consumer protection activities, the DCA is what would be called in business a 'false-front' operation. Of its more than $20 million budget, only some $300,000 went last year to the Division of Consumer Services, the consumer protection arm of the department. The rest is swallowed up by the myriad boards and bureaus responsible for licensing and regulating a variety of occupations and professions. They have almost all become captive of the licensees they are supposed to regulate." And the DCA has been touted as a model of consumer protection!

Its handling of complaints was awful. Instead of the 80 per cent effectiveness rate claimed, the actual rate was nearer 30 per cent. Complaints coming to the Board of Contractors, for example, took as long as four years to go through the pipeline. Many complaints against the medical and related professions stayed in limbo forever, thanks to the well-known reluctance of doctors, dentists and nurses to discipline one another.

Meanwhile, the DCA's Division of Consumer Services

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Sacramento Bee

declined into a profound inertia generated by the pro-business Reagan administration. Far from writing any new consumer legislation, division members rarely bothered to step across the street to testify before the state legislature when a consumer bill was being heard. The division did little or no research, did not represent consumers before other agencies (e.g., the Public Utilities Commission), did almost nothing to clamp down on fraud or false advertising, and totally ignored the profoundly serious issues of price fixing, monopoly and concentration. Its idea of consumer education was to issue a barrage of press releases (900 in a recent year), most of which were good only for scratch paper. The division's lack of communication with consumer groups was almost complete; except as a target for investigation, the whole DCA rated a big yawn.

While Consumer Action was investigating the lethargic DCA, other groups and individuals were looking into the state's agricultural marketing order boards. Set up during the late depression year of 1937, these now cover supply, quality, advertising and promotion, research and unfair practices in the production and marketing of thirty commodities ranging from milk to avocados. Originally designed to promote "orderly marketing" (whatever that meant), the boards have clearly degenerated into cartels.

A recent study—"Social Implications of Marketing Order Boards"—by William Kopper and Isao Fujimoto (in circulation, but not officially published by the University of California at Davis) found "ample evidence that marketing orders provide a means for the concentration of economic power within the industry"—for example, wine—and the formation of powerful growers' cooperatives, like Western Growers Association, which were probably exempt from the antitrust laws.

The Kopper study also criticized the co-option of university agricultural researchers, who increasingly found themselves diverted to work on industry projects: e.g., the production of hard tomatoes, which could be machine-harvested but were inferior in taste and nutrition to the squashy old love apple, and to the mechanical harvesting of lettuce, which threw the farm worker out of a job.

Some marketing board advertising and sales programs were downright dirty. The Milk Advisory Board sent out researchers to ferret through people's refrigerators, without telling them the name of their client, or the real purpose of the visit. Having found that 30 per cent of households had run out of milk, the board began producing TV commercials reminding people to stock up. Payola—illegal in the recording industry—flourished on the Avocado Board, which bribed dealers with free movie kits if they took part in the board's advertising campaign.

Certain marketing boards curtailed supplies in order to fix or raise prices. Most blatant in this respect was the Milk Marketing Board which, with full state cooperation, set minimum retail prices high enough to allow supermarkets big profits. Last year, the Egg Marketing Board was caught quietly, though quite legally, dumping excess production in Japan at below market prices in order to force California shoppers to pay an extra 5 cents a dozen. On at least two occasions (1970 and 1971) the Peach Marketing Board dumped or destroyed hundreds of thousands of tons of surplus peaches rather than lower prices or take a loss.

When Jerry Brown became governor, consumers held their breath, for a while. How receptive would he be to consumer issues, particularly the performance of the DCA, and to the idea that agriculture was too important to be left to farmers, marketing boards and other bureaucrats? But at the start of his administration, the Governor was preoccupied with the farm labor and medical malpractice crises; consumer problems were way down on his list. Several months passed before he even got around to appointing a new DCA director. Then, passing over all the well-known consumer activists in the state, he picked Taketsugu Takei, a handsome but undynamic deputy public defender of Santa Clara County, whose only claim to consumer involvement was membership in the Berkeley and Palo Alto Co-ops. Brown's choice of Agriculture Director was no better: he appointed Luther Wallace, ex-rancher and agricultural economist, a man who soon made it clear that greater public involvement in the Golden State's number-one industry would take place over his dead body.

The authors of *Deceptive Packaging* huddled with Sen. George Moscone to write the Consumer Protection Act of 1975, a package of six bills turning the DCA inside out and greatly increasing the powers of its director. The consumer groups also maneuvered privately to give the top DCA brass more muscle. For head of the Division of Consumer Services they proposed Helen Nelson, long a leader in the consumer movement and fifteen years earlier consumer counsel to Governor Brown, Sr. This brave try didn't come off, but at least the division did get a consumer activist, attorney Richard Spohn, formerly with the California Citizens' Action Group.

Would the new DCA moguls support the very legislation designed to make the agency more effective? It was an incredible question, but, given the DCA's lackluster record, one that had to be faced. At first, Takei, the new director, was lukewarm, being particularly opposed to one of the bills which would split his department in half. But

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members of his new *ad hoc* consumer advisory committee worked quietly to change his mind. They also warned that, unless basic changes were made, they would all go home and business would be as usual.

Faced by this threat to their comfortable kingdoms, an astonishing variety of businesses and professions came roaring out with guns loaded for the reform legislation. So many of them wanted to lobby against Senator Moscone's legislation that he had to call a mass meeting: about thirty people came—nurses, doctors, veterinarians, animal health technicians, pharmacists, chartered accountants, engineers, geologists, contractors, barbers and beauticians.

In vain Consumers Union's West Coast representative, Ray Bonner, complained that it was illegal for the boards and bureaus to lobby, particularly on DCA stationery. They lobbied hard; Takei wavered. Brown, who is open to consumer issues but apparently sees them hazily, gave token and belated support. All the bills in the Moscone package went down, except one—a bill to strengthen the powers of the DCA director. Consumer groups gnashed their teeth, particularly at Brown, who had publicly endorsed their idea of a consumer majority on the boards and bureaus but had done nothing to push it.

Critics of the marketing boards were also running into problems, for now there was no chance of getting more than one public member on each board. What could solitary amateurs achieve, especially since they were being picked by the director of agriculture with the advice of the producers they were supposed to watchdog?

Fortunately, some small victories were in the offing. After months of petitioning for lower milk prices and an end to state price fixing, and even calling a brief "fight and switch" boycott in 1974, the Berkeley Co-op and California Citizens' Action Group (CALCAG) persuaded the Agriculture Department to give price competition a tiny try. Retail milk prices were decontrolled in the Sacramento area for a limited period. Not surprisingly, they dropped a few cents, and to everyone's relief, neither the corner grocer nor small dairyman went out of business.

Then the Co-op and CALCAG discovered that there was an embarrassing surplus of cling peaches, still being sold to the public at the usual price of 39 cents a pound. They decided that the insane destruction of food had to stop. Don Rothenberg, the Co-op's Education Director, asked Agriculture Director Wallace for a list of those crops which were in surplus, and requested him to suspend the marketing orders which effectively raised prices by deciding what quality of produce should be sold, at what price, in what containers, and how it should be handled.

When Wallace balked, Rothenberg informed him that he planned to buy surplus peaches direct from the farm and sell them at 12 cents a pound—"and if you want you can put me in jail." Three weeks later, the peach marketing order was suspended. Co-op shoppers snapped up cheap peaches, and told management they preferred low-cost produce, even if not so beautiful. Prodded by the Co-op, the DCA asked leading supermarket chains if they would follow suit. Surprisingly, they said they might. Then it rained, or so the growers claimed, the peach surplus dried up, and the canners bought up the balance. But at least the experiment proved that crop dumping—and agricultural red tape—need not be a way of life.

Quiet reform of the DCA is still underway. The surviving Moscone bill will greatly strengthen the director's powers, giving him (among other things) the power to prosecute and to intervene in ongoing legal disputes. To what extent the new director will even so be a strong leader is not yet certain. Why has Takei not protested to the state Public Utilities Commission over their decision in the SoCal-ARCO case, which would raise Southern California utility rates by $630 million over the next seven years to pay for natural-gas exploration in Alaska? His explanation is that the DCA is a little weak on research, and utility regulation is a complicated issue. Is he being prudent or timid, or does he take orders from above? Only time will tell.

At least the DCA is being overhauled internally. Pressed hard by Consumer Action, Governor Brown permitted the Division of Consumer Services to get a $475,000 budget augmentation for fiscal 1976. It sounds no big deal, since the money was already there, earmarked as surplus, but it took Consumer Action two years of hard work and it was accomplished despite Brown's vowed intent to slash all government costs. Plans are being made for DCA to hire more attorneys for lobbying and advocacy, and a bigger research and education staff. Deadwood personnel are quietly being eased out; the rest are being jollied or bullied into greater efficiency.

The DCA is also coming out into the open, meeting consumers and exploring grass-roots issues. During the past few months, the department held two important hearings on the problems of used-car buying and warranties, and on the unaccountable shortage of canning lids which is still plaguing home cooks around the country. Consumers Union, Consumer Action and CALCAG recently submitted a "sunshine" petition, based on the precedent of the Consumer Product Safety Commission, asking the DCA to make public a record of its meetings and telephone conversations relating to official business. Also, the search for good public members for the licensing boards and bureaus continues—several consumer activists are applying.

The California experience shows that no debased government bureaucracy can be turned around quickly. It requires continual nagging—on the phone, through petitions and lawsuits, in public hearings and before the legislature. Only repeated contact can overcome the wall of glass which envelops people when they join the bureaucracy—causing them first to lose touch, then common sense, finally any real hope of making change. But if trying to recapture bureaucracy is difficult, not trying at all is worse. What follows is a society and economy in which business interests run rampant, government hangs like an albatross around the neck of the public, and the ordinary citizen shrinks into a private shell of despair and alienation. □

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BOOKS & THE ARTS

Prophecy Is a True Account of the Present

PROPHETS ON THE RIGHT: Profiles of Conservative Critics of American Globalism. *By Ronald Radosh. Simon and Schuster. 351 pp. $9.95.*

ARTHUR A. EKIRCH, Jr.

As scourge or conscience to their times, historians have the responsibility for re-examining those heretical ideas and opinions which belatedly have the ring of truth. This constant exercise in historical revisionism, which was quickly applied to World War I, has now begun to influence our understanding of World War II. A generation of younger historians, often part of the so-called New Left, in its disillusionment with Vietnam and the cold war, has been taking another look at the justification for the Korean War and World War II. Was Vietnam, they ask, really an aberration in United States foreign policy, or was it merely the logical extension of an era of American interventionism and global imperialism, masquerading as liberal internationalism?

Ronald Radosh, who teaches in the City University of New York, has applied his knowledge of recent American foreign policy to a review of these questions. As "prophets on the Right," he selects five men who opposed American entrance into World War II and who afterwards criticized U.S. activities in the cold war. Of course, these men were not unique in their stand. Pacifists, and some prophets on the non-Communist Left like Norman Thomas and Dwight Macdonald, were also consistent critics of American globalism. But what makes his five public figures especially significant, Radosh argues, is the way these men and their views became anathema to the liberal establishment which has dominated modern American foreign policy. Charles A. Beard, Oswald Garrison Villard, John T. Flynn, Sen. Robert A. Taft and Lawrence Dennis, all widely denounced as pariahs and isolationists in their own time, seem in varying degrees eminently sound and sensible today as we reread their attacks on the direction of American diplomacy. Many of their predictions have come true, and in general their analysis appears closer to reality than the starry-eyed views of the official bipartisan consensus.

Arthur Ekirch Jr. teaches history at the State University of New York at Albany. His latest book is Progressivism in America: A Study of the Era from Theodore Roosevelt to Woodrow Wilson (*New Viewpoints*).

Radosh calls his subjects conservative critics of American globalism, and indeed all five men ultimately became identified to some extent with right-wing opinion. But Beard, Villard and Flynn, though not Socialists, were among the most advanced liberals in the 1930s. Beard, the eminent historian famous for his economic interpretation of the Constitution, had strong roots in American Progressivism. Villard was equally distinguished as editor and publisher of *The Nation*, while Flynn wrote a column on economics and politics for *The New Republic*. Flynn was the first to break with the New Deal—late in 1933 over the NRA—but each of the three initially gave their support to Roosevelt. Although Beard by 1935 began to suspect that the New Deal would lead to war, Villard continued to waver between isolationism and internationalism as a means of preserving the peace. Dennis, already marked in the 1930s as America's leading intellectual Fascist because of the elitist tone of his books criticizing American capitalism, was the maverick in the group. Taft, the most conservative, was not a leading political figure or intellectual until he emerged as a member of the isolationist bloc in the Senate in 1939.

The author in his introduction makes it clear that he is concerned with more than the mere academic exercise of finding historical precedents or heroes to vindicate his criticisms of American cold-war policies. What is most meaningful about the strictures of Beard, Taft and the others, he writes, is the way in which a review of their ideas, "re-asking the questions these men asked, examining the realities they confronted, and pondering the answers received in response to their probing doubts," can help us to understand ourselves and our world. In a series of parallel chapters for each of his five subjects, Radosh shows the consistency of their objections to American global interventionism before and after World War II. Although only Villard was a doctrinaire pacifist, the isolationism of all five men tended in that direction. Beard, Flynn and Dennis especially emphasized the economic pressures upon American foreign policy. Like President Roosevelt and the early New Dealers, they believed that it was in America's best interests to cultivate a sound economy at home. If the United States did not pursue an aggressive, expansionist foreign policy, Germany and Japan represented no clear and present danger to American national security.

Their emphasis on the imperialistic, totalitarian tendencies within the American body politic, which stood revealed in the cold war, made prophets of many of the isolationists. Men like Beard and Taft were not, moreover, naive Midwesterners, blind to world forces. As Radosh points out, "Beard did not deny the expansionist nature of the Fascist powers. His heresy was that he did not exclude the United States from similar charges. Unlike mainstream historians, Beard did not view the United States as unique, as a nation uninterested in power and concerned only with attainment of peace and justice, playing a world role only when forced to respond to aggression by other nations." The Machiavellian argument that President Roosevelt had to deceive the short-sighted American public by obscuring or concealing his steps toward war was a shocking manifestation of the abuse of Presidential power. The notorious incidents on the Atlantic between the U.S.S. *Greer* and *Kearney*, convoying British and neutral vessels, and Nazi submarines were not, as the President alleged, examples of innocent American defensive actions. But Taft was a minority voice when he told the Senate on October 28, 1941, that "If the President can declare or create an undeclared naval war beyond our power to act upon, the Constitution might just as well be abolished." Taft denied that the President had the right "to plunge the nation into a shooting war," or

DUSKY SALLY

As a young girl
in the evenings, no one came to me
but in dreams—from across the river,
out of a photograph or the pages
of a novel.

He leaned against the pillar
and engaged me in passionate conversations.
I was always ready
in a crisp new cotton sari every day.
I was prepared
to lose him in an accident or a war
or to a previous betrothal,
or we would grow apart naturally.

Anyway, I had my pride,
and that was something.

Shreela Ray

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to "prowl the ocean in quest of offensive warfare."

When Taft subsequently in 1951 co-authored a resolution declaring it to be the sense of Congress that no additional military forces be sent abroad "without prior authorization of the Congress in each instance," he was ridiculed by a number of liberal Senators and historians. Two decades later, in the wake of Lyndon Johnson's Gulf of Tonkin incident and Richard Nixon's Watergate cover-up, these critics have had to admit that, in the words of one of the historians, "Taft had a more substantial point than he supposed twenty years ago." What had happened in the meantime was that many erstwhile liberals, in their acceptance of the militarism necessary to support a *Pax Americana*, had become arch-conservatives, enamored of the supposed virtues of executive power and military authority.

It is noteworthy that none of Radosh's prophets on the Right became a redbaiting anti-Communist. Beard and Villard, the most traditional in their liberalism, died soon after World War II, but Flynn, who had fought hard to keep the America First movement free of right-wing extremists, became an embittered McCarthyite. Even so he opposed the Korean War. Taft, with his political ambitions and responsibilities, was an inconsistent critic of American foreign policy, voting against NATO but supporting MacArthur's aggressive stance in the Far East. The truest liberal, at least in an old-fashioned sense, was, somewhat surprisingly, Lawrence Dennis. On trial during World War II as a Fascist sympathizer, Dennis emerged after the war as a forthright analyst of American militarism and imperialism. In his newsletter *Appeal to Reason*, he did just that, opposing the trial of the Communist leaders under the Smith Act, urging a strict and impartial *laissez faire* in place of America's paternalistic state capitalism, and rejecting every manifestation of an expansionist foreign policy.

Dennis complained of the hypocrisy of conservatives who supported a balanced budget and free market along with foreign and military policies which necessitated more spending and state intervention in the economy. At the same time, a number of so-called liberal Democrats, in their penchant for government spending, were willing to underwrite a permanent war economy as a means to a welfare state. Radosh does not pursue the question of whether capitalism or socialism is the gravest threat to world peace. But the subjects of his essays would, I think, agree that America's global foreign policy reflects a mixture of state capitalism and state socialism.

Not the least of the merits of this fine book is its warning against an uncritical assumption of guilt by association and against stating relative issues in absolute terms. New Dealers and cold warriors attacked Beard and his fellow isolationists for the company they supposedly kept, paying little attention to the substance or merit of their views—views which now, from the vantage point of Vietnam, more and more liberals or libertarians of the New Left or the New Right are ready to accept. Radosh offers a timely lesson in historical perspective and political humility from which we can all benefit. □

To Impose a Phrasing on History

RAGTIME. *By E.L. Doctorow. Random House. 270 pp. $8.95.*

JOSEPH MOSES

> . . . the Bronx is a borough of hills and valleys but you don't see this if you live there.
> *E.L. Doctorow, "The Songs of Billy Bathgate"*

Time defeats us in two ways: it bullies us by pursuit, and it mocks us with evasion. We grow older; we are consumed. Yet, at the same time, the events that practice on our mortality, that "do us in," are themselves disordered, senseless, refusing to cohere. E.L. Doctorow is a remarkable novelist precisely because he confronts the mockery of time directly and attempts to master it with footwork fancier and more playful.

Most fiction attains coherence by constructing a narrative in which the premise of sequence controls event and governs selection. *Herzog* or *Lolita* speak to us with the richness and intensity of a fully created paradigm; they become possible analogies to our lives and we experience satisfaction in their arrangement.

But in *The Book of Daniel* Doctorow already demonstrated his preoccupation with actual history, with real event. The outstanding achievement of that book was to establish a linearity that threaded among the confusions of three decades, from the riots of Peekskill to the side shows and dizzying rides of Disneyland, from the impotence and rage that surrounded the execution of the Rosenbergs to the explosions of the 1960s on campuses throughout the country. The central metaphor was brilliant. The images spectacularly appropriate. Equally impressive was Doctorow's handling of the tension between the character Daniel—the Daniel Agonistes—and the narrating Daniel, the desperate sardonic intelligence determined to see it all in pattern and in place. "I suppose you think I can't do the electrocution," writes the narrating Daniel about the horrifying execution of his parents. "I know there is a you. YOU: I will show you that I can do the electrocution."

This sense of directly engaging history—"The real-world act" Doctorow calls it in this latest book—and of bringing to the contest intelligence and wit, identifies *Ragtime*, unmistakably, as a sequel to *Daniel*. The specific period that Doctorow stakes out begins in 1902 and ends when, to an increased tempo, he ties up his few remaining strings hastily and neatly at the close of World War I. Like so much in the novel, however, the slicing of time is a many-sided metaphor as well as a reality, a framework for comic distortion as well as a metaphor. "It was evident to him," the author says, looking through the eyes of one of his characters, "that the world composed and recomposed itself in an endless process of dissatisfaction." The perception is made even more graphic in the image that follows, where time becomes the surface of an ice-covered pond in winter: "But the boy's eyes saw only the tracks made by the skaters, traces quickly erased of moments passed, journeys taken." The reconstruction and division of history is obviously a tentative, slippery business, impossible as it is humanly inevitable.

Similarly, historical description is both simple and complex, paradoxical. "There were no Negroes. There were no immigrants," writes the author, in seeming confidence of his ironic meaning. But the limited irony is inadequate, and a page later he is quite content to reverse and rearrange: "Apparently there *were* Negroes. There *were* immigrants." Even the statement with which Doctorow finally summarizes the uniqueness of the period reverberates with ambiguity: ". . . the era of Ragtime had run out, with the heavy breath of the machine, as if history were no more than a tune on a player piano." It reminds the reader of an earlier statement and a related image. "He listened to the Victrola and played the same record over and over, as if to test the endurance of a duplicated event." The duplications of both art and life are comprehended in that allusion.

In making meaning out of history, ambiguity is a richness that cannot safely be trimmed away. And Doctorow does as little trimming as possible. He merely pushes an ambiguity in one or more directions. The blackness of the Negro, for example, is related to the blackness of the silhouette portraits fashioned by Tateh, the street-corner artist, and these connect with the self-imposed blackness of Younger Brother,

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who becomes—in blackface—a minstrel of revolution and a bomb artist.

Still, if random history is to be disciplined, it will be put in order only by sacrificing history, by substituting in its stead a human design. In *The Book of Daniel* Doctorow gets out of this dilemma by dramatizing a tension between the "two" Daniels, by dramatizing the balance and the will necessary to cross the distance between event and pattern. In *Ragtime* he executes a more comic and audacious maneuver.

Narrated history either understates or overstates. Therefore, Doctorow does both—and pulls his distortions center stage. He proclaims them. He delights in them. He comments about them. On the more intimate level of personal history, we have the families of Father-Mother-Younger Brother and, eventually revealed, their immigrant counterparts in the family of Tateh-Mameh. Their namelessness and the anonymity of Doctorow's staccato prose emphasizes a presentation as flattened as Tateh's silhouettes. (The ambiguous metaphor strikes again.) They are allegories of American history, of the melting pot, of the middle-class life, of making sacrifices, or making good in technological, democratic U.S.A. Whatever the intricacies of their roles, they follow prescribed allegorical destinies as surely as characters in Hawthorne. Heartbreak or joy may lie just beyond their outlines, but it is only the suggestion that Doctorow wants. Otherwise he controls by refusing them dimension and keeping their very excesses within an obvious comic understatement. Even the black Coalhouse Walker Jr. and his Sarah begin as limited, contained personal histories—though their tragedy is that they become part of a larger, more public history.

On the other hand, in dealing with the public record, Doctorow goes to the opposite extreme and pronounces control, not by diminution but by the most flamboyant augmentation. The facts he uses are crucial to his purpose, for through them he can demonstrate the range of the liberties he is taking, the vigor of his comic sweep. "Back home a momentous change was coming over the United States. There was a new President, William Howard Taft, and he took office weighing three hundred and thirty-two pounds." With one magisterial stroke the author has usurped and subordinated history.

In another instance, Doctorow describes an accident during the excavation of the Brooklyn subway tunnel. "One typical hazard was the blowout, a situation in which the compressed air found a weakness in the roof of the tunnel and escaped with a violent rush. One day there was a blowout so explosive that it sucked four workmen out of the tunnel and blew them through twenty feet of river silt and shot them up through the river itself forty feet into the air on the crest of a geyser. Only one of the men survived." The outrageous, the hyperbolic, the impossible—these are the elements from which Doctorow fashions a coherence so factitious and arbitrary it no longer distorts, but attains a purity and comic integrity of its own.

Here, as elsewhere in the novel, there materializes the absurd artist-figure of Harry Houdini, historical and pseudonymous, wandering Jew and Christ. "He went all over the world accepting all kinds of bondage and escaping." He has escaped, Doctorow tells us, from bank vaults and sausage skins, from Boston jails, Chinese torture crucifixes, Siberian exile vans. At the bedside of the critically injured sandhog, he introduces himself. "I'm Harry Houdini, he said to the family, I escape for a living . . . I'm an escapologist. But let me tell you I've never done an escape that can touch this one." The secret of the sandhog's survival, though, is not revealed to him; he is thrown out.

Despite his significance as a parody of the art-life dialogue in *Ragtime*, Houdini is somewhat peripheral to the book's main concerns. For the work is essentially a political "Rag" and, as Doctorow remarks, "Houdini never developed what we think of as a political consciousness." Nevertheless, the delights of the novel are frequently in the marginal associations. For example, Doctorow picks up Houdini's known devotion to his mother ("He was passionately in love with his ancient mother. . . .") and uses it as the occasion for a quick historical summation: "In fact Sigmund Freud had just arrived in America to give a series of lectures at Clark University in Worcester, Massachusetts, and so Houdini was destined to be with Al Jolson, the last of the great shameless mother lovers, a nineteenth-century movement that included such men as Poe, John Brown, Lincoln and James McNeill Whistler." This abrupt,

SAN FELIPE DEL AGUA

On the hill at night
one tries to sleep
but in the heat
the cantina's making noise.
One waits.
Slowly
the cantina dies.

The last bus
crawls back to roost
grinding its engine out
through its burnt exhaust.
It shrieks, moans,
gives one last cough,
lies dead beside
the village square.

Now in the small
& huge of night
one thinks of sleep,
the will to sleep
as the village sleeps,
to wake
as the village wakes.

(Every day
before the dawn
day laborers
begin their day.
Calls & shouts
against the dark
already downed.
Camaraderie
of roosters, waking men,
wives, children.
One thinks of them.)

But it is night.
Under the mountain
the dogs begin.
They are trotting within
the Saint's mountain.
Their paws scratch on stone.
They are loose at the very dead
& dark of things.
They bark. Distant, near.
One hears them bark.
The village walls
choke their sound.
Still they bark.
The walls of the village sink.

Streets, gardens, houses
sink into the earth. The earth
closes upon them
black as dog sound.
Still the dogs bark.
Demonic, terrible, hounds
of the oldest gods,
they cough like jaguars,
snarl in the night,
in the Great Dark
bark back & forth.
They are pacing nearer.
The steep sound of their baying
comes from the mountain
louder, clearer.
One dreams of sleep.
One prays for sleep.
One cries to oneself
for sleep. One knows
they are only village dogs.

Anthony Ostroff

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strange little catalogue (a mini-analysis of history) is followed by a few marvelous pages portraying Freud's arrival in New York in the company of the pre-apostate Jung. Waiting at the dockside are Ernest Jones and A.A. Brill, and the entire party goes on a tour of New York City that ends in Coney Island, where one of the amusement parks is called Dreamland. "The dignified visitors rode the shoot-the-chutes and Freud and Jung took a boat together through the Tunnel of Love."

For all the differences of tone and manner, public event and private history both exhibit related aspects of Doctorow's showmanship and comic control. It is as though we were seated in a theatre where on the huge screen, overblown and larger than life, Movietone News recounted the movements of the period's notables—J.P. Morgan buying an Egyptian pyramid, Emma Goldman proclaiming anarchist truths to a crowd. Against this background of large figures, there is a smaller screen behind which shadow figures, in silhouette, act out a number of related smaller dramas. The two entertainments comment on each other, synchronized at times by parallel and at others by paradox. In one of the final developments of the book it is as if the shadow-screen turns movie; the smaller history, too, becoming part of the public record of an era. Tateh, the silhouette artist, fades, then reappears as a Hollywood producer. Doctorow "dissolves" into Robert Altman.

But during the entire production, Doctorow, the silhouette artist, the Houdini escapologist, the Scott Joplin-composer of ragtime-Ragtime, is seated at the piano controls domesticating time, outdoing time at its own game. The objective is to impose a phrasing on history, to syncopate its rhythm—to rag time.

The expression of the artistic ideal is quite explicit. It occurs early in the novel during the description of a Sunday afternoon at Father's house in New Rochelle when the ill-fated Coalhouse Walker favors the family with two compositions by Scott Joplin. "The melodies," Doctorow writes, "were like bouquets. There seemed to be no other possibilities for life than those delineated by the music." The second piece, which is "the most famous rag of all," is described as "a most robust composition, a vigorous music that roused the senses and never stood still for a moment."

These are both noble aspirations, but it is especially to the second that Doctorow has come very close indeed. □

Autocrat and Patron of the Arts

A FORGOTTEN EMPRESS: Anna Ivanovna and Her Era, 1730-1740. *By Mina Curtiss. Frederick Ungar Publishing Co. 335 pp. $12.50.*

DOROTHY ATKINSON

As the title of this biography proclaims, Anna Ivanovna is indeed a largely "forgotten Empress." Readers of the work will understand why. They are likely to conclude that the justice of history's verdict is only too well confirmed here. Yet if the book fails to rescue its heroine from a seemingly well-deserved oblivion, it nonetheless sheds light on aspects of the reign that deserve greater attention; and in the process it unintentionally reactivates the ever challenging question of the role of the hero and heroine in history.

Mina Curtiss's interest in this 18th-century Russian ruler arose from a 1962 visit to the Soviet Union with the New York City Ballet. Later readings about Russia's past and culture uncovered an apparent paradox: the beginnings of Russian ballet and opera are traceable to the reign of Anna Ivanovna, yet her era is often dismissed by historians as one of the "darkest" in a well-shaded past. Anna herself was described to the author by an Intourist guide as "the worst ruler we ever had." Concluding that the character of the recognition rendered the Czarina was due to the cultural myopia of historians who "rarely show any awareness of the social significance of the arts," the author, a nonhistorian unfamiliar with the Russian language, set out boldly to right the record.

A bibliography in five languages attests to the diligence with which the subject was pursued. (Russian sources were unearthed and translated by a research assistant.) Though far from exhaustive, the list makes it clear that this niece of Peter the Great has not been entirely overlooked in historical literature. To the author's great credit, she made no attempt to impose upon the sources a preconceived model of Anna as an enlightened patroness of the arts, nor to select from the historical materials only those elements that could be made to conform to such a model. What emerged was perhaps less dramatic, certainly more complex, and infinitely more revealing.

The thoroughly unremarkable woman sketched in this portrait, a younger daughter of Peter's dull-witted brother and co-ruler Ivan, was the accidental and unlikely heiress of autocratic power in Imperial Russia. After Ivan's early death, his family was taken under Peter's benevolent care. Coming of age in a society torn from its traditional moorings by her dynamic uncle, Anna was married off to the Duke of Courland in a foreign match unprecedented for Russian princesses for several centuries. When her young husband died less than a month after the wedding, she was denied permission to return home; her presence in the Polish vassal state kept the door open for Russian influence. Without political interests or power, and without an income adequate to maintain her position in local society (one of her many appeals to St. Petersburg for funds refers to a debt for "this year's black dress"), she spent a dreary interval of two decades in the small Baltic duchy. Her prospects for remarriage blocked by diplomatic complications, Anna found consolation in a liaison with Ernst Biron, a native adventurer who rose to the post of chamberlain in her modest court.

A sudden succession crisis in Russia in 1730 unexpectedly presented the boyar magnates with an opportunity to curb Czarist absolutism. From their perspective, the very grayness of the country mouse in Courland commended her over more colorful and more promising candidates. Anna readily accepted the set of limiting conditions that accompanied a windfall invitation to the throne, but the support of a rival boyar faction enabled her to tear up the fine print later and to take power without any curtailment of autocratic authority.

Every rags-to-riches scenario has an inevitable appeal. Our cherished illusion of free will beats constantly against an atavistic sense of fate, gossamer against flame. Yet if the prospect of a wildly beneficent fate is enormously gratifying, the tendency to identify ourselves with the long-shot winner leads to dismay when the prize is squandered.

Anna Ivanovna retained power for the remaining decade of her life. But the uses to which she put it were tragically restricted by the narrowness of her conception of her role. Limited in her abilities, education and experience, she was incapable of exercising effective leadership and left affairs of state to others. She busied herself, as the author notes, with "favorite projects in realms regarded as legitimately feminine—fashion, entertainment and the arts." Admittedly, there is evidence of some conscientious attempts by Anna to keep informed and to provide direction. The impressive example of Peter clearly influenced some of her policies: her support of the Navy, and of the Academy of Sciences (from which she requested horoscopes); and perhaps also her general predilection for things German. The most striking and most unfortunate example of the latter was her close lifelong relationship with her imported, highly

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unpopular, favorite—an association which caused the entire reign to be labeled pejoratively the "Biron Era."

Petty weaknesses, less significant in others, were magnified by Anna's position. Her wardrobe expenditures were prodigal, her preoccupation with grandiose ceremonial and lavish entertainment, legendary. But the reach of this parvenu for "culture" often exceeded her grasp. The elegant Ice Palace she had built at great expense was put to the service of a coarse practical joke as an enforced honeymoon hotel. An entire chapter of the biography is devoted to this bizarre episode. Such is the stuff of the reign. Or at any rate, the stuff that can emerge from a focus on the reigning autocrat. There is a disquieting element in this kind of spotlighting in history: there are perhaps 20 million Russians standing in the wings here whose presence is barely noted.

The population at this time was virtually enslaved, despite important distinctions differentiating social groups. Anna was not responsible for this enslavement, but neither did she mitigate it socially or politically; and her insouciant extravagance hardly lightened the burdens on the populace. Does the featured player merit greater attention than this cast of extras? If social historians have short-changed culture, then cultural history can all the less afford to be detached from its social context.

The Czarina's shortcomings, like the crudeness and cruelty so evident in her reign, were typical of the age, as claimed; but Anna's poor press in history is to be explained by a lack of redeeming features that helped to compensate in the case of some other Russian rulers. It is of particular interest, then, to find the argument elaborated in this work that she has not received adequate recognition for "virtues [that were] responsible for beginning or supporting a seminal culture. . . ." To describe as "virtues" unprepossessing traits and tastes that turned out to have fortuitous consequences may be overly generous. Anna appears to have had mixed motives in inviting Western performing artists (actors, musicians, dancers) to her court: they provided personal entertainment on a homely level, and served on occasion to impress society with secular spectacles that rivaled the magnificence of Church pageantry. Although opera met with less enthusiastic initial reception, ballet proved a great success from the start. The explanation offered is that the universal language of the dance required no translation and therefore appealed immediately to the largely illiterate Russian court.

Among the earliest Western artists to enjoy Anna's favor was Antonio Rinaldo (Fursano), a talented comic dancer who is said to have introduced the "passion for leaping" into France. The appeal of the art to Russians is indicated by the fact that in the school of the Corps of Cadets established by Anna, dancing became a highly popular elective, second only to the German language course. Dancing became a favorite court pastime and the complex figures executed at Anna's elaborately costumed balls excited foreign admiration. The newly trained Cadets were gradually enlisted in the court performances of foreign dance troupes, and soon new ballets were being choreographed for the Cadets by their teacher, the Frenchman Landé. In 1737 Landé's petition to establish a ballet school of six boys and six girls for "theatrical dances" was approved by Anna. The Czarina herself chose the dozen from the children of court servitors. This was the beginning of an enterprise that the French dancing master assured Anna would add to her "many splendid virtues." Mina Curtiss fulfills Landé's prophecy as she describes Anna's "unquestionable contribution to the future glory of Russia."

Anna's support of the performing arts is beyond dispute, but as this work appropriately acknowledges, exaggeration of her contribution would be a disservice, impeding comprehension of the mechanisms through which culture develops and is disseminated. Like the uncle she emulated at times, Anna was willing to borrow from the West whatever seemed useful. If her concept of the useful was rather more limited than Peter's, it could be argued that he was no more aware of the ultimate consequences of some of his own innovations. In evaluating the impact of the individual on social development, however, Anna's role appears far less controversial than that of Peter, or of Catherine the Great who followed later. Progress was hardly Anna's most important product, although some cultural advancement may have been a by-product of her reign, just as she herself was the accidental product of her times. Only in a qualified fashion can she be presented as a cultural agent in history.

It is significant that only one chapter of the twenty-one in this biography is devoted to "Opera and Ballet," though this topic was the focus of the author's original interest in the reign. There is a certain tension evident throughout the work between the claim that more credit is due this forgotten Empress and a presentation that reveals the triviality of a ruler eminently forgettable. The illustrations selected for the work are doubly illustrative in this respect: they begin with a photo of Rastrelli's impressive statue of Anna, move on eventually to her chocolate pot, and end finally with a drawing of the bedroom in the Ice Palace. These, too, are in a universal language that needs no translation. □

The City as an Urban Wilderness

JUDAH STAMPFER

There is a general character to the American city that is altogether different from that of its European counterpart, and that gives a peculiar stamp to its temper and music—in poetry, film, fiction, drama and folklore. This new sort of being, the American city, is megalopolis. It has a protean quality that is steadily infiltrating the world. One can feel its tone in the Japanese film after World War II, in the quality of the great cities of Western Europe. The American city is seen, not as a model of civilized life but as a catch basin of population and an urban wilderness.

In Europe, ancient Rome was the supreme emblem and model of a city, a walled metropolis with well-defined social classes, founded on seven hills that grew like a social organism, steadily expanding until it embraced the Mediterranean basin. The Roman Empire was the city of Rome writ large, giving citizenship to the fortunate, drinking in all wealth and necessary sustenance, commissioning all governors and administrators, deciding on war and peace. Like a firm stone at the apex of an arch, one man, Caesar, unified the command of city and nation, enlarging it until it covered the known world.

In the Middle Ages, the Holy Roman Empire was an attempt, however shadowy and abortive, to reproduce the Roman model. The political states that grew with the spread of nationalism developed in the manner of Rome, as ambitious city-states, that unified their language, absorbed their hinterland, and expanded through the centuries to become empires—London, Paris, Moscow. Everywhere in such states, Roman law was studied, Roman associations were consciously pursued. The name Britain is derived from Brut, legendary descendant of Aeneas, father of Rome; the French language was traced to Roman Gaul, model of French civilization. Germany and Russia, also expansions of military city-states, called their rulers Kaiser and Czar, as latter-day Caesars.

The earliest cities of prehistory were laid out by exact mathematical plan, in squares, with regular walls and towers. Paradoxically enough, this regularity of structure is perfectly consonant with the mythic European view of the city as organic, a living

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growth, with a free soul, carving out its destiny. In both cases, the city makes sense—as a product of nature or of the human spirit. Wordsworth's sonnet, "Upon Westminster Bridge," is based upon the traditional metaphor of a city as an organism and a part of nature:

The city now doth, like a garment, wear
The beauty of the morning; silent, bare . . .
Dear God! the very houses seem asleep;
And all that mighty heart is lying still!

Strong parallels to the European pattern pervade the New England town. The first Puritan settlements began as an idea and were built around a square. Its clear demarcation from the wilderness resembles Puritan clothing, defining its boundaries and keeping out what does not belong there. Some New England states grew out of a first city, planted in the wilderness: Massachusetts out of Boston, Rhode Island out of Providence. Such states have their largest city and their state capital: Boston, Providence, Hartford. Boston alone among American cities participated in the American Revolution as London participated in the civil and national wars of England, with the Boston Tea Party, the Boston Massacre, the Battle of Bunker Hill.

The role and history of the European city brings out all the more sharply the fundamentally different American pattern, in which the cities are limp by comparison. No American city has ever fought for its survival as Vienna fought the Turks, or Stalingrad the Nazis. Characteristically, state bodies define the powers of incorporated cities. Cities are second-class citizens in the state, which establishes and maintains local government. A bicameral state legislature is characteristically organized to minimize the power of the metropolis.

The American city is thus a kind of municipal dybbuk, an odd collection of areas, ethnic groups and assigned powers with no historic or political identity. An accidental outgrowth of frontier settlement, at a ford, a crossroads, the entrance to a forest, its natural shape is not a Puritan town square but a Main Street open at both ends and pointed to California. New York is not the American heartbeat, as London is of England, but one of the largest of a number of sprawling metropolises—Los Angeles is an even larger sprawl. Indeed, such a city is not a metropolis but an urban wilderness.

This sense of the American city as urban wilderness was early sensed by Whitman, but in a benign fashion. His evocation makes Manhattan harmonious with America, as an innocent wilderness, where communion is open to earth, sea and sky:

MANNAHATTA

Now I see what there is in a name, a word,
liquid, sane, unruly, self-sufficient;
I see that the word of my city is that word
up there,
Because I see that word nested in nests of
water-bays, superb, with tall and wondrous spires,
Rich, hemm'd thick all around with sailships and steamships—an island sixteen miles long, solid-founded,
Numberless crowded streets—high growths of iron, slender, strong, light, splendidly uprising towards clear skies;
Tides swift and ample, well-loved by me, towards sundown,
The flowing sea-currents, the little islands, larger adjoining islands, the heights, the villas,
The countless masts, the white shore-steamers, the lighters, the ferry-boats, the black sea-steamers well-model'd, . . .

Carl Sandburg's "Chicago" is not a Midwestern Paris, a civilized idea rendered in brick and asphalt but an imbecile sprawl which civilization can scarcely approach. Indeed, Carl Sandburg's Chicago is just such a lobotomized municipal dybbuk as described above. But Sandburg's Chicago marks a shift of another kind from Whitman, a turning of the city from wilderness to jungle. This relates to the frontier concept. The metaphor of the American city as a Main Street open at both ends and pointed to California presumes westward movement, the municipality as a funnel to the wilderness. Once that outlet is blocked, the city has no natural shape and grows into meaninglessness. The urban wilderness then becomes an urban jungle.

The idea that the city represents the urban resurgence of the jungle is nightmarish. The very word is repeatedly used to describe American city life: the asphalt jungle, the blackboard jungle—concrete as a cancerous quicksand. American mythology has a strain of deep pessimism, a haunting sense of the wilderness as only temporarily eliminated, to return more intractable than ever behind the tidal wave of pioneer settlement. Such a setting suggests no literary form. American fiction spawns monstrous books like *An American Tragedy*, or the narrative libraries of James T. Farrell.

Even in realistic fiction, the neighborhoods chosen, the shots, the point of view, all tend to distinguish European from American cities. Paris emerges as a skeletal organism, with the Left Bank, the Bourse, the Champs Elysées, Montparnasse. Balzac's *Pere Goriot* comes to a climax at a reception for the aristocracy of Paris. Café scenes suggest a Latin openness, air and receptivity. American fiction and films fix on odd corners, outlying thoroughfares with no clear line to city government. The city is depicted more as a jellyfish, a blurry dinosaur, a spread of seaweed, not an animal with organs and a spine. *Last Exit to Brooklyn* reads like the anus of a jellyfish megalopolis. *The French Connection* chases around grimy slum corners of Brooklyn. *Scarecrow* shows a slattern corner of Detroit, with no sense of the car factories.

The American myth of the city as resurgent jungle bears upon the extraordinary image of the Brooklyn Bridge—Hart Crane's poem, the posters, editorials and streams of visitors, making it a myth. Innumerable paintings used it as a subject. Notable as was its intrinsic achievement, the Brooklyn Bridge also filled an emotional void. It is what New York never was, planned, rational, a harmonious shape, a bridge of humanity, dedicated to the advance of civilization. The Brooklyn Bridge supplied New Yorkers with some of what Paris as a whole supplies the French.

This hunger for a city as a center of civilization has given San Francisco a special place in the American ethos. A Spanish and Mexican prehistory endows it with an historic dimension, as the role of Boston in the American Revolution does for that city. Its outline is recognizable, a peninsula, jutting into the sea. The hunger for civilized structure has exalted the Golden Gate Bridge; but San Francisco, like Boston, is an odd sport alongside the characteristic urban sprawls of Chicago, Philadelphia and Los Angeles.

Indeed, the brutal realism of metropolitan film and fiction suggests the resurgent municipal jungle gone imbecile. Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* depicts the wilderness as being all the more intransigent from the taint of civilization. In *Last Exit to Brooklyn*, obscure impulses find articulation, biomorphic stirrings below the level of myth. The narrative flounders in blind alleys leading to empty lots, a sprawl

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without center or visible boundary, megalopolis.

In Gothic fiction, the landscape is libidinized; in gutter realism, it is excrementized, as the city becomes a sick old animal trying to purge its bowels. In *The French Connection*, the policeman's chase of a sleek French criminal overhead in the El has an emblematic quality. The criminal lightly descends on the city and would skim over it and escape; but the policeman shoots him on the platform, so that he falls dead. He descended too close to the city's bowels, and is trapped there forever.

The absorption of the American image of the city is one aspect of the American influence on Europe. Indeed, the American view of the city as urban wilderness is pervasive in Europe, but with inevitable shifts in tone. Godard and Antonioni films have sequences that show large abstract building complexes, ultramodern constructs of steel and glass, with no apparent relationship to any larger structure or metropolitan neighborhood. In this way Godard has repeatedly documented a modern city grown open and catatonic. The early Antonioni films are even more far-reaching, showing human beings stranded amid abstract architecture with nothing left to do.

The sense of the city as teeming sprawl gave power, breadth of scope and contemporaneity to Godard's first feature film, *Breathless*, all vivified by the restless movement about the city of the casual criminal who haunts it. All of Paris is open to him, boulevards and restaurants, theatres and parking lots. Godard's use of the hand-held camera reinforces the idea that the city is a trackless waste through which a drifter can wander at will.

In fact, the European sense of megalopolis goes beyond the American in suggesting that the entire world is megalopolis, and its population casual drifters, as human numbers increase and national boundaries thin to legal arrangements. Resnais's *Hiroshima Mon Amour* ends with the image of a girl trapped and adrift in the universal city. Such a changed image produces deep reverberations in the spirit. Human nature has a restless hunger for imitative magic, reading analogies from the city to a human organism. The medieval capital was the national sun, the head on the nation's shoulders, the crown of the country; the modern urban sprawl is a prone shapeless body without a head or a direction, life without a goal, human existence amid a formless atheism. Whatever its citizens believe, the city is a brainless animal, increasingly vicious, but extraordinarily sluggish. The human race today moves like an enlarged version of Sandburg's Chicago.

Its peculiar modern form is the American city; yet European writing had its image early. Dostoevsky's *Notes from Underground* suggests an organized social structure afloat over a loose, drifting mass of people. The decay is everywhere, the indifference, the empty lie, the loose nerve-ending. The drifter is a solitaire, but still only a foreboding of the shape of life to come. Dostoevsky still has a paradoxical hero, Cain with the truth branded on his brow; today he is commonplace and in no way heroic.

The death of the organic city pervades the work of Franz Kafka. *The Castle* is a dream fragment, a municipal graveyard, where the Castle—read the White House, 10 Downing Street, the Kremlin—is an aging, crumbling institution, in a whimsical relationship with common city life. Kafka sensed the change in process, but had no emblem for its forceful presentation. His Castle is still a medieval relic, with an archaic flavor. The faceless glass edifice in Antonioni's films is thus Kafka's true emblem, finally presented, and its inane, fragmentary life explored. When Kafka reaches the Castle, it has an American facade. □

TWISTER

We squared to take the brunt,
Offered sky
Full flat of every wall, glass bauble
And keepsake
To leave us whole below,
Stood loose
Change on edge
In the sidewalk cracks, needing
All the watchful
Eyes we could muster.

By noon, cirrus ran fishschool close,
Grew hummocky, whalish,
Until nimbus
Shaled us down, and under
That potboil lid,

We shook like peas
At simmer, town stove in
By waiting
for what passed harmless
Miles east,
Shaking down a peach or two,

And still, this taste
Of cedar on my tongue, the choice
Of splinters
I dreamed death gave me
On the cellar stair

To pick plaster from my teeth
On the slow updraft
To kingdom come.

Thomas Johnson

Kind Words for Shank's Mare

THE PEDESTRIAN REVOLUTION: Streets Without Cars. *By Simon Breines and William J. Dean. Vintage Books. 152 pp. Paper $3.95.*

THE CAR CULTURE. *By James J. Flink. M.I.T. Press. 260 pp. $14.95.*

JANE HOLTZ KAY

All cars ought to be black, Andy Warhol once said—not as a sign of mourning but as a backdrop against which people and street life could be seen in living color. Today's anti-automobilists go beyond that in their aim to restore the sidewalk and city to its inhabitants. They would like to paint cars into invisibility and thus establish "Les Droits Du Piéton," as a Parisian group of pedestrians calls itself. In theory, "we" are all walkers, not riders now; as we are all consumers, not producers.

Our attitude toward the automobile has come a long way, at least verbally, as these two revisionist books testify: we are into the second generation of anti-car advocates. Written into the title of *The Pedestrian Revolution* is the conviction that motorism is tyranny and "streets without cars" are more human places. Implicit in the explorations of *The Car Culture* is the wish of its self-described "automobile historian" to adjust the scholarly history of the car to the new views.

If the car was the idol of Americans through the 1960s, Jane Jacobs with *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* and Bernard Rudofsky with *Streets for People* were the first generation of idol smashers. Each countered the myths of half a century's self-destructive auto dependency: Jacobs demonstrated that the highway and free-standing high rise could not fulfill human needs; Rudofsky went back to the precincts of the walking city of Piranesi's Rome for his primer. "They draw energy from walking," he said of its citizens, "much as a battery is recharged by a car's movement." His imagery sprang from an era that had even its fantasies limned by Detroit, but he looked to a better way. Finally, the desanctification of the four-wheel chariot was completed by Ralph Nader, and Emma Rothschild regaled us with the auto industry's time of troubles in *Paradise Lost.*

These two books, then, are relatively slight additions to an ample literature; they

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are symptoms of how writers build on and transmit pioneer works. *The Pedestrian Revolution* by the architect Simon Breines and the lawyer William J. Dean defines the problem, sums up the literature, and charts the ways in which people have begun to cope with the effects of auto power by designing for "footpower." Though long active in such pursuits, the authors belong to a second generation of writers who tend to applaud a revolution that has progressed more in theory than in fact these last two decades. (I saw no evidence that "streets without cars are popular in Mexico," for one instance; quite the contrary, I watched last winter as workers numbered an historic statue prior to dismantling it to make way for an underpass on the main boulevard.) "The renaissance of the street" comes slowly.

Yet, obviously, such books help. This is a good popularizer—clearly written and amply illustrated for a broad audience, from high schoolers to town planners, bikers to political activists. The authors pick the liveliest of the literature, old and new: we learn of Caesar's daytime ban on cart and chariot traffic in Rome, get to see Rio's elegant paved sidewalks, hear new ideas such as a Pedestrian Advocate or directions in Braille at crosswalks. More than a tract, this book includes practical examples. Breines and Dean may hunger for the whole loaf ("The fully developed pedestrian district" such as Montreal's underground shops or a plaza at Jacob Riis Houses) but will settle for the do-able half (urban pedestrian islands and districts); nor do they snub the suburb's needs.

Less happily, the authors tend to laud their own work, to center on New York, to accept supersized spaces or clichés of pedestrianization uncritically (e.g., Toronto's City Hall "walkways," here praised, are in fact half-dead in the walking sense if you go around and behind their boomerang-shaped high rises). Finally, they chop up the text by crediting and quoting every first-generation deity at great length.

Nonetheless, the neat organization, brisk comment and attractive, portable format make a useful book: a summary of the case against the auto and good shots of pedestrian alternatives for the new consumers of a human streetscape.

The Car Culture is a contribution from the academic end of the same second generation of anti-autoists. Yet it promises more than it delivers. With its red, white and blue cover and Vance Packard-esque title, it describes itself as "the first social history of the American automobile." However, James J. Flink, a University of California (Irvine) professor, has in mind the anthropologist's narrow definition of culture rather than a popular one; the work is seen through the culture of auto makers. It is a dry industry history rather than an investigation of how we became history's first car culture. Anti-auto references do not a social history make.

There are enlightening items. A Chamber of Commerce survey showed little improvement in the lives of car buyers even back in 1920; New York was removing 15,000 dead horses a year from its streets before the early 1900s; and so on. Perhaps another title would have sent the book to its proper audience: one concerned with the internal combustion machine's defeat of the steamer, with Henry Ford's real role, with the "brilliant" move of William Durant in buying Fisher Body, or with the technical history of the declining independents.

The book is of a piece with the current publishing fashion of trying to buy popularity through flashy titles and an appeal to social issues. (A like case of academic specialization masquerading as something more is Oxford's *Instant Cities*.) Flink's preface shows him to be a man obviously indoctrinated by the first generation of urban, anti-auto writers mentioned, as well as by his own family tragedy. But, ironically, his book, like many of the designs depicted by Breines and Dean, and like our car-dominated society as a whole, shows that the pedestrian revolution and reorientation come slowly. □

THEATRE

HAROLD CLURMAN

"I'm a pessimist" is a line I don't find in the published text of Eugene O'Neill's *Ah, Wilderness!* (Circle in the Square). But it is spoken at the Circle production by Richard Miller, a boy "going on seventeen just out of high school," who shares some of O'Neill's traits at about that age. Certainly his books—Swinburne, the *Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam*, Oscar Wilde, Shaw, Ibsen and Carlyle—were very like O'Neill's reading in 1906. And Richard's opinions parallel those of the young O'Neill. "I don't believe in the silly celebrating of the Fourth of July"—the date of the play's action—"all this lying talk about liberty—when there is no liberty. . . .The land of the free and the home of the brave! Home of the slave ground under the heel of the capitalist class. . . .I'll celebrate the day the people bring out the guillotine again and I see Pierpont Morgan driven in a tumbrel," etc.

The Miller home—the father, Nat Miller, editor of a small-town newspaper in Connecticut; Essie, his ever loving wife; her alcoholic brother; Nat's kindly old-maid sister; Richard's brothers and sister—are not, except for some details, counterparts of O'Neill's home, but they reflect an affectionate memory of the times and a few of his friends. O'Neill was something more or something different than a "pessimist," but it can be said that he took a dark view of life; sometimes it seems that he employed considerable effort to prove to himself through the experience he fashioned that existence was largely a wretched affair.

O'Neill as man and artist fits into no simple category—except that he remains America's foremost dramatist—and a definition of him in any respect cannot readily be set down. But it is safe to say that *Ah, Wilderness!* is O'Neill in his mellow mood, his most facile and pleasant. Seeing it again provides a thoroughly agreeable occasion. Though I must confess with a blush that when I saw it as first presented in 1933, I expressed some resentment against what struck me as sentimental nostalgia during the worst days of the depression!

The production at the Circle in the Square (on West 50th Street) which originated at the Long Wharf Theatre in New Haven is technically expert; Arvin Brown, who staged it, is a knowing and skillful director; he takes advantage of every possible moment which may have a sure effect. He misses no "point" and sees to it that his actors carry out his intentions exactly. In this sense his production is

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NOT KNOWING

Lying half one side of midnight
half the other I fall to gentle weeping
remembering the terrible things
that cannot be lived over to be changed
the sad things that can never be smiled at
remembering also the moments of light
above flowers above faces
the translucent moments of love

and I do not know why I am weeping
whether it is for the one thing
or the other.

Virginia R. Terris

entirely successful and will be enjoyed. What troubles me about it a little—I do not believe my demur should entail undue severity—is that its comedy is not altogether in tune with the spirit of the text. The performance is too "contemporary" in a manner which I find patronizing and complacent. We are induced to watch it as if we were much wiser, and above all more "advanced" than the fuddy-duddies of 1906. There is an inappropriate element of caricature which falsifies it.

O'Neill's tone here is tender, relaxed, essentially respectful. There is even a certain gravity in the play, a base of thoughtfulness. For instance, O'Neill suggests something sad in the drunken Sid Miller, the talented and frustrated newspaperman in the backward New England town. As we see the play in the new production it is all comic, in an almost vaudevillesque fashion. O'Neill is touched by the adolescent couple (Richard and his sweetheart) who are going through the throes of first love. Now it is being kidded. Nor should we believe as we are led to and pretend that there are no more families in which the old-time sweetness and decorum in the Miller family still obtain—without being especially funny. O'Neill found very little that was merely quaint about such households. He wished that he might have lived in one of them; there was too much misery in his own.

The cast assembled is generally a good one. I especially liked Geraldine Fitzgerald's Mrs. Miller and Teresa Wright's Lily Miller—both have qualities of natural purity. There is an attractive ease and dignity in William Swetland's Nat Miller. The direction and playing of Richard—O'Neill thought him the play's pivotal character—was too stressed for jokes. Richard Backus plays the part as if the boy were merely green and foolish in his rebelliousness without any suggestion that this aspect of the character may grow and deepen in time. The scene of the two juvenile "lovers" is the poorest in the production because, lacking in the honest lyricism or freshness of sentiment which it should contain, it seemed only a thing to be laughed at, like a takeoff on a *Saturday Evening Post* boy-girl romance.

For all that, *Ah, Wilderness!*, as presented, is a good show. □

FILMS/Robert Hatch

Lina Wertmuller lists herself as the author of her new film, *Swept Away* (*By an Unusual Destiny in the Blue Sea of August*), but she has been at least assisted by the authors of such romantic classics as *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, *The Admirable Crichton* and *The Swiss Family Robinson*. It is the always reliable story of Caliban and the Lady, both of whose tables are turned when circumstance places them in a howling wilderness. Though, in fact, this wilderness does not really howl; it is an island in the Mediterranean, unpeopled but well provided with fresh water, small game, attractive shelter and excellent fish and crustaceans in the surrounding area.

The film opens on a holiday yacht chartered by Raffaella (Mariangela Melato), a wealthy, handsome, indolent and insufferably arrogant woman of right-wing political sympathies, who is discovered arguing stridently with a guest who holds sturdily to the principles of parlor communism. Their blasphemous and scatalogical debate is followed with round-eyed disgust by Gennarino (Giancarlo Giannini), a Sicilian dock hand who is a Communist in fact and a believer in male supremacy and the decadence of the upper bourgeoisie. He is the chief victim of Raffaella's apparent notion that the servant class performs best when kept in a state of humiliation.

Miss Wertmuller's plot strands these two on the uninhabited island, where Gennarino undertakes to adjust the relationship that had existed between them. He makes her wash his clothes before he will let her eat and, when they have been ashore long enough for sex to become a pressing interest, he makes her adore him before he will slake her passion. He offers her his opinions of a society stratified by money and, slapping her and kicking her to enforce the lessons, he instructs her in the duties of a Sicilian housewife. The lady thrives under this treatment; for the first time in her life she is, as they say, fulfilled. And, for his part, Gennarino is exalted by possession of her silken and ingenious body. (I apologize for the feverish phrases, but this Crusoe and his girl Friday are indeed sportive.)

Giannini and Melato are a pair of demonstrative actors—indeed, they demonstrate at about the level of a Japanese Samurai movie—and the development of their relationship in isolated and primitive surroundings generates a good deal of beguiling slapstick. They have both been pigs—he a male pig and she a Fascist pig—and in each other's arms they lose most of their porkiness. But that is a somewhat routine sort of desert island optimism and I kept hoping that, in Diaghilev's words, Wertmuller would astonish me.

After some time, the rescue vessel appears offshore and I thought this might be bringing the illuminating surprise, even so late in the picture. Raffaella wants them to hide from the vessel—paradise being good enough for her—but Gennarino, machismistic to the end, must test their love against the associations and commitments of the real world. These prove exceedingly strong; she weeps and quivers, he roars and gets drunk, but happy endings occur only on enchanted islands (particularly when both parties are married, and one of them has children in profusion). There is talk of divorce—in Italy a subject of topical amusement—but she goes off with her sickly lizard of a husband and he with his dumpy, devoted and no-nonsense wife. *Swept Away* is a pretty film and a boisterous one, but from the director of *Love and Anarchy* I expected something more than the information that a tempestuous love affair between a natural man and a reformed bitch is no match for the pressures of capitalist society. □

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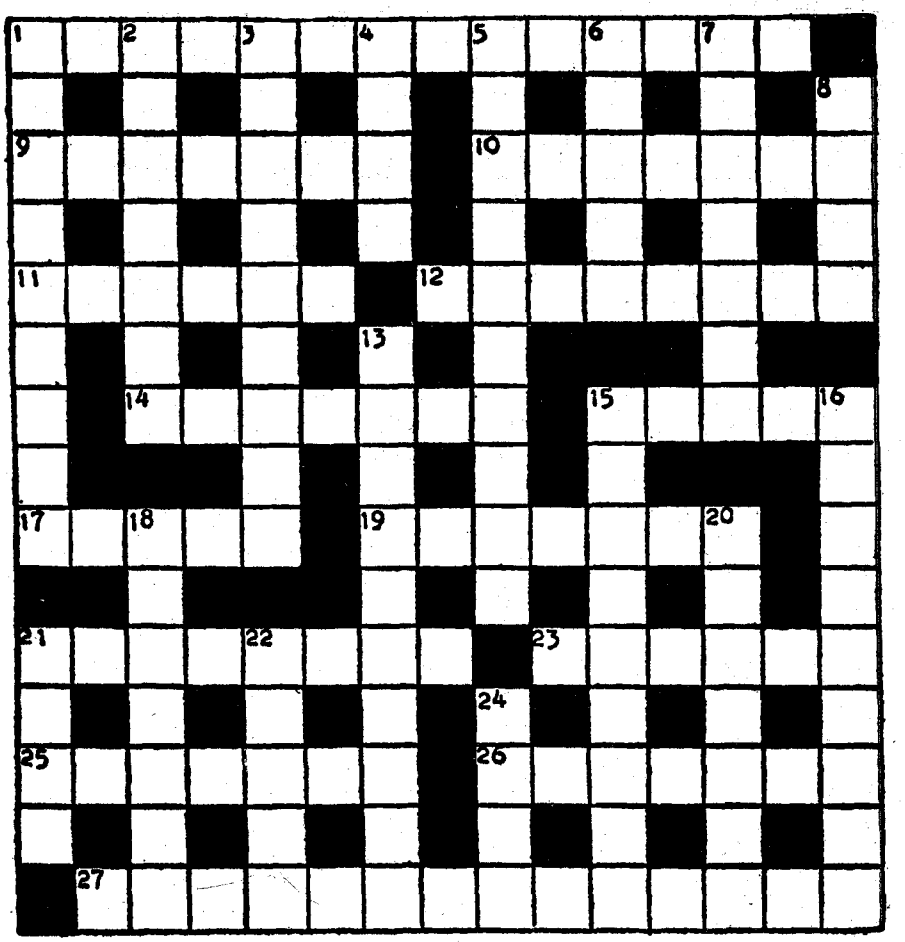
Crossword Puzzle No. 1601

FRANK W. LEWIS



ACROSS

1 Golden platter backer, as seen by Abou? (9,5)
9 Laundress, but not the French take-off of it . . . (7)
10 . . . . and your French friend can make it easy to get along with. (7)
11 Would the English consider them dirty digs? (6)
12 Highly compressed paper saver carried to extremes. (8)
14 Thus our exits are made quickly, if you do. (4,3)
15 Steer down here in good time for the winner. (5)
17 and 23 X ☐ represents two functions in New York. (5,6)
19 One in carpentry and bricklaying, for example, makes outbursts. (7)
21 Short rations may be good for the young. (4,4)
23 See 17 across
25 Sort of ripe a short month back, as some ears might be. (7)
26 No Pollyanna could make it saltier! (7)
27 Great tennis stars might win with such instant inspiration! (6,2,6)

DOWN

1 The actors aren't polished evidently, but this is rudimentary. (9)
2 Some body is a bounder in the way you'll swear! (7)
3 Takes another hitch. (9)
4 and 22 down Disguised CIA post of this, by the very nature of the case. (4,5)
5 Old circus performers. (10)
6 The horse sounds so negative, we hear. (5)
7 Some pipes might be pushed out of the way. (7)
8 Drawn by eye, if you're a certain kind of expert. (4)
13 Walker comes across with it, possibly. (10)
15 Certainly not the left hip in Moscow! (3,6)
16 Poetaster—the sort that might be musical. (9)
18 Certainly not the most bitter time LSD brings out. (7)
20 Language literally belonging to the coast. (7)
21 Moves, possibly one foot up, with the grain. (4)
22 See 4 down
24 Count in German. (4)

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE NO. 1600

ACROSS: 1 Tablecloth; 6 Thus; 10 Eroding; 11 Rhubarb; 12 Outs; 13 Poinsettia; 15 Tiepins; 16 Effendi; 17 and 20 Fame and fortune; 22 Innkeepers; 23 Itch; 25 Iron Age; 26 Agonies; 27 Gang; 28 Celebrator. DOWN: 1 The cost of living; 2 and 18 Blow the Man Down; 3 Exit; 4 Lagoons; 5 Terence; 7 Hearten; 8 Submarine chaser; 9 Cuneiform; 14 Bilateral; 19 Deplete; 20 Furnace; 21 Untwist; 24 Moor.

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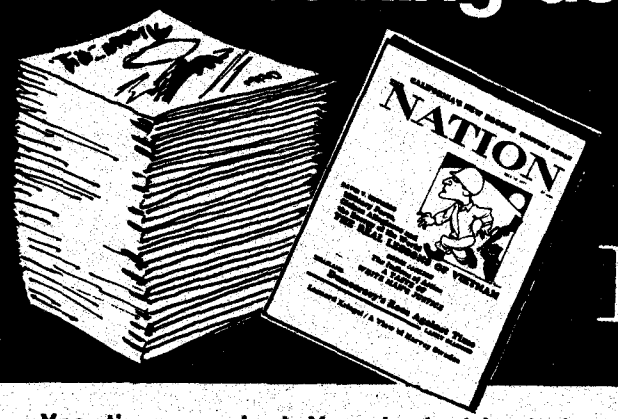

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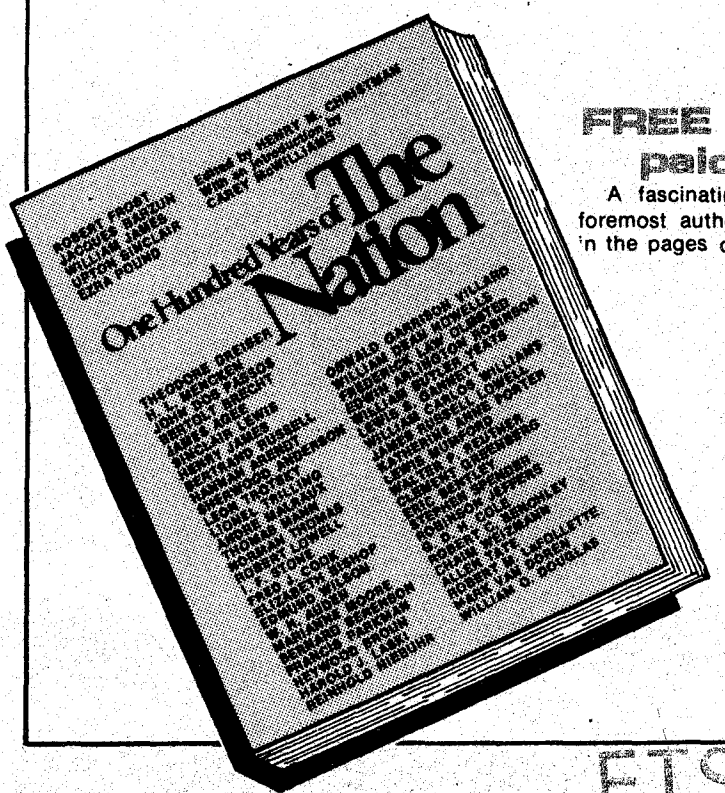

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